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Item 5 of the provisional agenda\*

**Review of the conference structure of the Commission  
in implementation of resolution 69/1****Review of the conference structure of the Commission in  
implementation of resolution 69/1****Note by the secretariat\*\****Summary*

The present note contains an analysis of the programmatic, organizational and budgetary implications of the proposed changes to the conference structure in accordance with the relevant provisions of Commission resolutions 69/1 and 70/11. The paper draws on the findings and recommendations of the in-depth study and analysis undertaken by an external consultant to facilitate the review of the conference structure by the Commission at its seventy-first session. ESCAP member States also provided valuable inputs through interviews and a survey questionnaire administered during the period from September to October 2014.

The Commission may wish to consider the recommendations contained in the report and adopt a resolution on the conference structure.

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\* E/ESCAP/71/L.1/Rev.1.

\*\* The present note was submitted late owing to the ongoing consultations with the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission through its informal working group on the conference structure review.

## I. Background and introduction

1. In 2008, the Commission adopted resolution 64/1 establishing the current conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The resolution called for midterm and final reviews of the conference structure at the Commission's sixty-seventh and sixty-ninth sessions, respectively. As part of the final review, the secretariat engaged Hafiz Pasha, former Minister of Finance of Pakistan, to conduct an independent study. Subsequently, the Commission adopted resolutions 69/1 and 70/11, requesting the Executive Secretary to conduct further study and analysis on proposals to reform the Commission's conference structure and to report on their programmatic, organizational and budgetary implications at the present session.

2. Specifically, in resolution 69/1, the Commission requested further study on and analysis of:

- (a) Constituting a new committee on energy;
- (b) Converting the Committee on Information and Communications Technology into a committee on technology;
- (c) Reforming the governance structure of the regional institutions and their integration within the secretariat's programme of work;
- (d) Strengthening the effectiveness of the resolutions adopted by the Commission, including indications of measurable outcomes and reporting modalities for the actions to be undertaken by member States and the secretariat;
- (e) Convening the eight committees every other year, with four committees meeting each year for a maximum duration of three working days, with half a day or one day devoted to joint plenary sessions between multiple committees, if required. The Commission may mandate a specific committee or multiple committees to meet in the intervening year if a particular topic becomes an urgent issue to the region;
- (f) Organizing, by the secretariat's subregional offices, preparatory meetings prior to Commission sessions on the theme of those sessions at the subregional level, with a view to enlisting due participation of representatives from civil society and the private sector to provide inputs into the theme study.

3. The Commission also requested the Executive Secretary:

- (a) To combine the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* and the theme study prepared for each session of the Commission into one flagship publication;
- (b) To promote, through videoconferencing and other means, the participation of countries that do not have permanent missions to the secretariat in Bangkok in meetings of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

4. In resolution 70/11, the Commission requested the Executive Secretary "to conduct a study on and analysis of the programmatic, organizational and budgetary implications of constituting a new committee on science, technology and innovation and a new committee on financing for development, bearing in mind the process for implementation of Commission resolution 69/1."

5. In preparing the present note, the secretariat drew on the findings and recommendations of a study conducted by an independent external consultant, Filemon Uriarte, former Secretary (Minister) of Science and Technology of the Philippines, who undertook extensive consultations with members of the Commission and secretariat staff. The secretariat also benefited from informal consultations with member States through the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

6. Section II of the present note contains a brief overview of the development context in which the review of the conference structure is being undertaken. It also highlights the strategy to ensure the Commission is “fit for purpose” to assist member States in addressing critical or emerging regional and global challenges.

7. Section III presents a package of recommendations to reform the conference structure, along with their programmatic, organizational and budgetary implications.

8. Section IV contains a table showing how a revised conference structure would address the proposed sustainable development goals.

## **II. Ensuring the Commission is “fit for purpose” for the new development context beyond 2015**

9. The United Nations stands poised to adopt a new development agenda beyond 2015, at the heart of which are 17 proposed sustainable development goals and 169 targets. For Asia and the Pacific, this ambitious and far-reaching road map comes at a time when the region is recognized as the driver of global economic growth, a key hub for international trade, investment, and technology and innovation, and a rising centre for cooperation and collaborative approaches between developing countries.

10. At the same time, most of the world’s poor and hungry still reside in Asia and the Pacific, not only in the region’s least developed countries but also in its many middle-income countries. As benefits from economic growth remain unevenly distributed, rising inequality between and within countries continues to pose a key challenge. With large numbers of workers still in vulnerable employment, and millions of youth looking for jobs, creation of decent and productive jobs remains a priority. Economic insecurity is further heightened by limited social protection coverage across much of the region. In this context, poverty and inequality remain a key developmental challenge for the region.

11. Rapid economic growth has also come at an environmental cost, with sustainability now a key issue for the region. The past few decades have seen resources consumed at an unprecedented pace, stretching the region’s ecological limits. Poor management of the environment has also contributed to poverty and, to a certain extent, exacerbated the effects of disasters. This is a concern particularly relevant to Asia and the Pacific, the most vulnerable region in the world to large natural disasters, and where decades of economic and social gains can be wiped out in a matter of days by a large-scale event.

12. The anticipated adoption of the development agenda beyond 2015 presents the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific with an opportunity to bolster efforts to address its core priorities — eradicating poverty, reducing inequality, promoting economic cooperation and

integration, and restoring environmental sustainability — through both a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and an emphasis on the means of implementation.

13. The Commission will continue to strive to close development gaps and build stronger, more resilient, regionally integrated economies. In addition, with the rapid economic development in the region, there are more opportunities to significantly augment North-South vehicles for development support by unleashing the full potential of South-South cooperation, which is playing an increasingly important role in global development. Moreover, the Commission can also leverage the technological and scientific innovation occurring in the region as member States, particularly the developing countries, increasingly embrace technological innovation as a key driver of economic growth and poverty reduction. Recent examples of such South-led initiatives and cooperation include the creation of regional financing facilities, increased capital flows among developing countries, and establishment of relatively new regional and subregional connectivity initiatives such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' energy grid, the Asian Energy Highway and the Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway.

14. ESCAP has the opportunity afforded by the conference structure review to ensure that it is “fit for purpose” in this development context, and that it is able to provide member States with the most effective and efficient support possible. In this new era, ESCAP will be required to assist countries in building partnerships for development cooperation, including with the private sector; strengthening development strategies that cut across multiple sectors; and measuring their progress in achieving the soon-to-be adopted sustainable development goals. As a regional body, the Commission also links global and regional norms and standards to national-level operations — the latter is a principle recognized by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/226 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system.

15. The success will, to a large extent, be driven by a stronger, more representative and coherent regional voice and partnership, which can also influence internationally agreed development commitments at the global level. It will also be measured by the increased commitment and capacities of countries to engage in regional cooperation to address poverty, inequalities and environmental sustainability, as well as economic integration.

16. The reforms that are proposed below all aim to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Commission's conference structure, enabling it to build synergies between its core functions, namely:

(a) To serve as a centre for high-quality and innovative research and analysis in response to emerging or persistent issues within the region;

(b) To serve as an intergovernmental forum to forge consensus on norms, agreements and policies on inclusive and sustainable development;

(c) To serve as the region's hub for development and a platform for knowledge-sharing and capacity development for inclusive and sustainable development.

17. The secretariat stands ready to align its work to assist member States by focusing its activities on the following strategic goals:

(a) Supporting implementation of the sustainable development goals, particularly through balanced integration of the three dimensions of

sustainable development in key strategic areas, as articulated by member States;

(b) Promoting regional economic cooperation and integration, particularly through trade and regional connectivity in energy, transport and information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure;

(c) Reducing inequalities, promoting the realization of rights and empowerment of women, and enhancing the social inclusion and rights of other vulnerable and marginalized groups;

(d) Promoting sustainable management of natural resources, climate change adaptation and mitigation, as well as resilience to disasters and shocks;

(e) Promoting the means of implementation of the sustainable development goals by developing institutional mechanisms for regional cooperation in areas including financing for sustainable development; science, technology and innovation; national statistical capacities; as well as a monitoring and accountability framework at the regional level.

18. ESCAP has also adopted a more rigorous system to integrate the work of the functional divisions, subregional offices and regional institutions in order to reinforce common goals. Greater monitoring and accountability mechanisms have also been instituted to ensure delivery in a cost-effective manner.

19. The Secretary-General has called upon the entire United Nations system, including the regional commissions, to support the implementation of a new development agenda. In his own report<sup>1</sup> to the General Assembly, the Secretary-General writes: “A United Nations system that is ‘fit for purpose’ to deliver on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda is one that must be relevant, innovative, agile, inclusive, coordinated and results-oriented. ... Such a system requires shared goals, visionary and committed leadership and a global, highly skilled and adaptable international civil service. And it must reach the highest standards of accountability, transparency and impact.”

### **III. Recommendations to reform the conference structure and the programmatic, organizational and budgetary implications**

20. In consideration of the current development context of Asia and the Pacific, and the likely outcomes of the global negotiations on the development agenda beyond 2015, the Commission may wish to consider the following recommendations to reform the conference structure.

21. The recommendations are accompanied by a brief rationale/discussion, along with an analysis of the programmatic, organizational and budgetary implications.

#### **Recommendation 1: Create a new committee on energy**

22. The General Assembly has shaped the global energy agenda through several resolutions such as 65/151 on the International Year for Sustainable Energy for All and 67/215 on the promotion of new and renewable sources of

<sup>1</sup> See A/69/700, para. 152.

energy, which also declared 2014-2024 to be the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All, forming the foundation for goal 7 on energy in the proposed sustainable development goals. Within the United Nations the energy agenda is being driven by the Secretary-General's Sustainable Energy for All initiative, which focuses on providing access to energy for all, increasing the share of renewable energy and promoting energy efficiency. Similar developments and shifts in focus have been at work at the global level as the United Nations system has been deliberating on the development agenda beyond 2015.

23. As a result, the proposed sustainable development goals exhort all Governments to ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. A particularly relevant target calls on all Governments to enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technologies, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, as well as advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and to promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technologies by 2020.

24. The Commission has been at the forefront within Asia and the Pacific of ensuring equitable access to energy; promoting sustainable production and consumption of energy; and bolstering energy security within the region. Commission resolution 70/1, with its references to regional energy security and sustainable use of energy through regional cooperation, and resolution 68/11, concerning enhancement of energy security through energy connectivity, in particular through the exploration of establishing an Asian Energy Highway, have been central to its engagement on energy matters. ESCAP members have further elevated the central role of energy in the development of the region at the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, held in Vladivostok, Russian Federation, in 2013, where they noted the large potential and need for energy connectivity and energy markets in the region, and requested the Executive Secretary to further raise the profile of energy and to mainstream it into the programme activities of the secretariat through Commission resolution 70/9 on the implementation of the outcomes of the first Asian and Pacific Energy Forum.

25. Extensive consultations with member States during the evaluation exercise conducted in 2012 in preparation for the final review of the conference structure review at the sixty-ninth session of the Commission indicated that the majority of member States wished to strengthen the work of ESCAP on energy security, the integration of regional energy markets, as well as the sustainable use of energy.

26. Currently, energy matters are deliberated upon under the auspices of the Committee on Environment and Development. To effectively and efficiently address these energy challenges and their related issues, the secretariat recommends that a stand-alone committee on energy be established as a subsidiary body of the Commission and that it meet every other year.

#### *Programmatic implications*

27. The Commission currently addresses energy matters through subprogramme 4 on environment and development, which is reviewed by the Committee on Environment and Development. Constituting a new committee on energy will allow for consolidation and reframing of the regional energy agenda in a more cohesive manner, under a new subprogramme dedicated solely to energy. The said subprogramme would contain previously existing areas of work, such as enhancing energy security and sustainable use of energy, while new areas such as energy connectivity would be added.

*Organizational implications*

28. The proposed committee on energy will be established as a subsidiary body of the Commission. As such, the committee will require the secretariat's support in organizing its sessions and conducting its work, as required. The energy section currently situated within the Environment and Development Division would be upgraded in line with paragraph 7 (a) of Commission resolution 67/2, which calls on the Executive Secretary to strengthen the role and capacity of the ESCAP secretariat in the area of energy security. Therefore, two additional professional posts, at the D-1 and P-3 levels, will need to be established in addition to the section's existing staff to effectively backstop the committee.

*Budgetary implications*

29. Organizing the sessions of the proposed committee will require non-post costs of approximately \$30,000 per biennium, mainly due to additional expenses for translation, interpretation and other conference services. Additional costs may also be incurred due to potential fees for consultants or experts for preparing background materials, as well as honorariums, travel costs and daily subsistence allowance for invited speakers. The cost of establishing the two additional posts is \$679,100 each biennium.

**Recommendation 2: Convert the current Committee on Information and Communications Technology into a committee on information and communications technology, science and innovation**

30. The rapid development of Asia and the Pacific has been greatly spurred by the development and diffusion of new technologies. As a result of decisive efforts to consolidate economic and social policies in support of innovation, creativity, and research and development capacities, several countries in the region have successfully transitioned into modern knowledge-driven economies. However, the majority of countries in Asia and the Pacific still lag behind both in terms of their internal capacities to innovate and their access to the innovative and creative outputs generated abroad.

31. Through the emerging sustainable development goals, the global United Nations system has called for a broader view that combines science, technology and innovation. In particular, the sustainable development goals call for enhancement of North-South, South-South, as well as triangular regional and international cooperation, to boost access to science, technology and innovation.

32. They also promote the development, transfer, dissemination and diffusion of environmentally sound technologies for developing countries on favourable terms. The sustainable development goals echo the objectives and goals of the Istanbul Declaration, adopted in 2011, which requested Member States of the United Nations to promote the access of least developed countries to knowledge, information, technology and know-how, and to support them in improving their scientific and innovative capacity for structural transformation.

33. Perhaps most importantly, the proposed sustainable development goals designate science, technology and innovation as one of the means of implementation pivotal to supporting their achievement overall.

34. In recognition of the rising importance of innovation and creativity, the Commission has emphasized technology in its programme of work and its structure, through regional institutions and through a dedicated committee on information and communications technology. The members of the Commission have echoed the sentiments, expressed at global forums, to approach science, technology and innovation more cohesively. Through resolution 69/1, the Commission decided to study the implications of broadening the scope of ESCAP from ICT to all matters related to technology, a decision based on the evaluation exercise conducted in 2012. Resolution 70/11 called on the secretariat to study the organizational, programmatic and budgetary implications of creating a new committee on science, technology and innovation. Subsequently, the independent consultant, after discussing the matter with member States and secretariat staff, recommended expanding the scope of the current Committee on Information and Communications Technology to include science, technology and innovation.

35. In conclusion, this recommendation is central for making ESCAP “fit for purpose”, both from the viewpoint of the sustainable development goals and the future challenges that lie beyond 2030 — the effective addressing of which hinges on the application of developments in science, technology and innovation.

#### *Programmatic implications*

36. The Commission presently addresses science, technology and innovation related matters through subprogramme 2 on trade and investment, which is reviewed by the Committee on Trade and Investment, and subprogramme 5 on ICT and disaster risk reduction and management, which is reviewed by the Committee on Information and Communications Technology. The two subprogrammes include such areas of work as the promotion of regional cooperation in ICT; human and institutional capacity-building on ICT for development; connectivity for the creation of inclusive, knowledge-based societies; exchange of information, good practices and networking on innovation and emerging technologies, including renewable energy and agricultural technologies; and space applications. The two subprogrammes would need to be streamlined and rationalized to ensure coherence and synergies between existing areas of work and to deliver on these new mandates.

#### *Organizational implications*

37. Several organizational units within the secretariat have the capacity to conduct work on ICT and science, technology and innovation, including the Trade and Investment Division, and the regional institutions, such as the Asia-Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology and Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development, with the Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division focusing on ICT connectivity as well as servicing ESCAP mandates on offering early warning signals to member States. Some changes to the respective work programmes for each of these units would be required. One additional professional post at the P-4 level would be needed to effectively backstop the committee in the new programme areas.

#### *Budgetary implications*

38. The cost of establishing this additional post is \$313,800 each biennium.

**Recommendation 3: Convert the current Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development into a committee on macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development**

39. In the context of poverty reduction, investments of more than \$2 trillion a year are needed to ensure basic infrastructure, such as electricity, roads and safe water as well as social services, and climate change adaptation and mitigation in the Asia-Pacific region. The mandates of the emerging development agenda beyond 2015 are likely to increase these figures.

40. International forums have widely recognized the important role that financing plays in enabling development. One notable example is the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, which highlighted the urgent need to mobilize resources from a variety of sources and the effective use of financing, in order to give strong support to developing countries, including least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, in their efforts to transform their economies and to promote sustainable development. Recent United Nations reports, such as those from the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, the report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals and the synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the sustainable development agenda beyond 2015, have reiterated the need for a sustained focus on integrating financing issues in order to achieve sustainable development. These reports echo other global discussions about the need to strengthen the role of financing, including both the Monterey Consensus and the Doha Declaration.

41. The third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, 13-16 July 2015) will further provide the conceptual framework for the mobilization of resources from a variety of sources and the effective use of financing required to achieve sustainable development. The emerging sustainable development goals build on these commitments by requesting Governments to strengthen several areas, including domestic resource mobilization, capital market development, infrastructure financing including public-private partnership, social sector financing, small- and medium-sized enterprise and trade finance, financial inclusion, disaster finance and climate finance. The goals also seek to strengthen development partnerships, including South-South and triangular development cooperation, to spur the transformation of the development process in developing countries to attain long-term sovereign debt financing sustainability, and implement trade and investment promotion regimes for least developed countries and other vulnerable countries in the region.

42. ESCAP is moving towards a regional financial cooperation framework under the auspices of the Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific. Moreover, during the first Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development in 2014, the need for establishing a committee on financing for development was expressed and noted. This issue was further recognized at the Asia-Pacific Outreach Meeting on Sustainable Development Financing in 2014. All of these efforts culminated in the adoption of resolution 70/11, in which the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to conduct a study on and analysis of the implications of constituting a new committee on financing for development.

43. In light of the explicit need for a forum to discuss financing for development issues, including, among others, possible redirection of the Asia-Pacific region's large foreign exchange reserves and private savings to productive investments, particularly in infrastructure, it is the recommendation of the secretariat to convert the current Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development to a committee on macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development.

*Programmatic implications*

44. The Commission currently deliberates on financing for development through subprogramme 1 on macroeconomic policy and inclusive development, which is reviewed by the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development. The current mandate of the subprogramme includes addressing regional economic development policies and options, including in the area of financing for development. To effectively satisfy the growing need for development financing, the mandate of subprogramme 1 may be expanded to cover emerging areas of importance, such as infrastructure financing, regional financial cooperation and developing the region's capital markets, among others.

*Organizational implications*

45. Financing for development is currently addressed by the Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Development Division. A section on financing for development would need to be established to enhance the secretariat's capacity to work on this subject within the contours of the emerging directions and priorities of the third International Conference on Financing for Development. One additional professional post at the P-4 level would be needed to effectively backstop the committee in the new programme areas.

*Budgetary implications*

46. The cost of establishing this additional post is \$313,800 each biennium.

**Recommendation 4: Limit the duration of committee sessions to a maximum of three days and organize half-day or one-day joint plenary sessions of committees to consider cross-sectoral issues whenever possible or desirable**

47. Rationalizing the meeting schedule of the Commission, its subsidiary bodies and the ad hoc ministerial conferences and other intergovernmental meetings is an indispensable requisite for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of ESCAP. A preference for continuing the practice of joint plenary sessions between committees, as piloted in 2014 with the Committee on Information and Communications Technology and the Committee on Transport, has also been noted. Such joint plenary sessions increase efficiency by enabling committees to deal with cross-cutting issues and are likely to result in cost savings on some conference services, such as interpretation. To ensure that the Commission retains its capacity to address any particular topic of urgency, specific committees may be mandated to meet independently or jointly in their respective gap years.

48. Against this backdrop, and with the addition of a committee on energy, it is the suggestion of the secretariat that five committees can meet in the even years while the other four will meet in the odd years, for a maximum duration of three working days; that half a day or one day be devoted to joint plenary sessions between multiple committees, whenever possible and desirable; and a specific committee or multiple committees be encouraged to meet in the gap year whenever a particular topic becomes urgent for the region.

49. Thus, beginning in 2016, the committees will meet according to the following schedule:

(a) 2016: Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science and Innovation; Committee on Transport; Committee on Social Development; Committee on Environment and Development; and Committee on Statistics;

(b) 2017: Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development; Committee on Energy; Committee on Trade and Investment; and Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction.

*Programmatic implications*

50. The implementation of this recommendation does not impose significant programmatic implications.

*Organizational implications*

51. The implementation of this recommendation does not impose significant organizational implications.

*Budgetary implications*

52. The implementation of this recommendation does not impose significant additional budgetary implications.

**Recommendation 5: Reform the governance structure of the regional institutions as follows:**

- (a) **Abolish the technical committees of the regional institutions that have them;**
- (b) **Members of all Governing Councils ensure that their representatives come from the relevant line ministries;**
- (c) **Agree in principle that all operations and programmes of regional institutions will be funded through extrabudgetary resources;**
- (d) **Review each regional institution every five years to determine their continued financial viability and the continued relevancy of their programmes**

53. Since 1947, a number of regional institutions have been established by the Commission. Today, there are five regional institutions operating under the auspices of ESCAP. Several audits and evaluations by the Office for Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) have recommended the reform and rationalization of the governance structure of these institutions.

54. A 2010 OIOS audit recommended, for instance, that ESCAP should develop an action plan to better integrate the work of the regional institutions with the substantive divisions at the operational level, and that ESCAP should further review and rationalize the governance structure of the regional institutions in order to revitalize their activities and provide for their continued relevance and viability.

55. Similarly, a 2013 OIOS audit suggested that ESCAP should develop and implement an efficient and flexible administrative support services model for its regional institutions. The report also recommended that ESCAP should ensure that the donor base of the institutions is diversified. In acknowledgment of these reports, the Commission adopted resolution 69/1 requesting the Executive Secretary to conduct further study on and analysis of reforming the governance structure of the regional institutions and their integration within the secretariat's programme of work.

56. Through consultations with members States, the secretariat noted the desire to reduce overlapping governance structures and to rationalize reporting frameworks. Additionally, there emerged broad-based agreement that regional institutions should aim to address the urgent needs of member States and deliver services of clear value and relevance to them.

57. Under their current statutes, the regional institutions have several layers of administration and reporting. The Executive Secretary convenes the Governing Councils and submits the annual reports to the Commission. Apart from the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development, the regional institutions also host technical committees, which act as advisory bodies.

58. Moreover, when they were established, the regional institutions were fully funded from extrabudgetary resources. Both the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development continue to be fully funded from extrabudgetary resources, with the statute of the latter explicitly prohibiting its funding from the regular budget. Over the years, traditional donor support for the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology, the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Sustainable Agriculture and the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization has diminished, threatening their viability. To ensure their financial viability, one P-5 post each was established within each of these three institutions. However, under the current resource scenario of budget cuts and additional mandates, these posts will need to be redeployed to Bangkok.

59. To implement the recommendations of OIOS, rationalize the governance structure of the regional institutions, and ensure that they remain relevant and operational, the secretariat recommends that the technical committees, where they exist, are abolished, and that the members of the Governing Councils ensure that their representatives come from the relevant substantive line ministries.

60. The secretariat also recommends that the financial viability, substantive relevance and link to strategic priorities of ESCAP of each regional institution should be reviewed every five years, in the order linked to the year of their establishment. Moreover, given the budget cuts and increased mandates, the secretariat recommends that core support to maintain operations and carry out programmes of regional institutions should be funded completely by extrabudgetary voluntary contributions by member

States, particularly by the member States hosting the institutions, and that the regular budget P-5 posts allocated to three of them be redeployed to Bangkok.

*Programmatic implications*

61. If member States contribute significant resources, implementation of the recommendation poses no significant programmatic implications. It is expected that member States contributing resources and supporting the work of the institution will provide additional funds to cover the costs of the P-5 posts.

*Organizational implications*

62. Implementation of this recommendation implies the abolition of the technical committees; the Governing Councils will be comprised of experts from line ministries; and the redeployment of three P-5 posts funded by the regular budget.

*Budgetary implications*

63. The implementation of this recommendation does not impose significant additional budgetary implications.

#### **IV. Draft revised conference structure**

64. The recommendations in section III were devised to strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the Commission's conference structure so that it would be in position to address the needs of member States in the context of the development agenda beyond 2015, with the sustainable development goals at the heart of it. The recommendations also respond to the Secretary-General's call for a United Nations system characterized by administrative excellence, and which is more efficient, effective and agile to respond to rapidly changing situations, all the while increasing its accountability, transparency, inclusivity and participatory nature.

65. The table below shows how a revised conference structure would address all of the proposed sustainable development goals.

<b>Sustainable development goals</b>	<b>Committees addressing the goal</b>
Goal 1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development  Committee on Social
Goal 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development
Goal 3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Committee on Social Development

Sustainable development goals	Committees addressing the goal
Goal 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Committee on Social Development
Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Committee on Social Development
Goal 6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Committee on Environment and Development
Goal 7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Committee on Energy
Goal 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development
Goal 9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Committee on Trade and Investment  Committee on Transport  Committee on Trade and Investment
Goal 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries	Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science and Innovation  Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development  Committee on Social Development
Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Committee on Environment and Development  Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction
Goal 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Committee on Environment and Development  Committee on Trade and Investment

Sustainable development goals	Committees addressing the goal
Goal 13	
Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Committee on Environment and Development  Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction
Goal 14	
Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	Committee on Environment and Development
Goal 15	
Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Committee on Environment and Development
Goal 16	
Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Committee on Social Development
Goal 17	
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Committee on Statistics  Committee on Trade and Investment  Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development  Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science and Innovation