

**235 (XXI). ADOPTION OF THE AGREEMENT ON INTERNATIONAL ROADS
IN THE ARAB MASHREQ**

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recognizing the increasing importance of the issue of the facilitation of transport and, in particular, of transboundary transport, in the light of contemporary trends including globalization and the establishment of free trade zones which make it necessary to take action to reduce the obstacles to international commercial traffic,

Recalling the recommendations made by the Committee on Transport at its first session, which was held at ESCWA headquarters in Beirut on 9 and 10 February 1999, and the declaration issued at that session on the adoption and development of an integrated transport system in the Arab Mashreq (ITSAM), of which the Commission took cognizance in its resolution 221 (XX),

Recalling also the recommendation made by the Committee on Transport at its second session, which was held in February 2001, to the effect that the draft agreement on international roads in the Arab Mashreq should be adopted,

Affirming that the ITSAM network represents the goal for the integration of the various means of transport in order to connect the countries of the ESCWA region, with a view to encouraging intraregional commerce, and link those countries with neighbouring regions, thereby serving international and transit commerce,

Recalling further that all transport-related activities in ESCWA are aimed at facilitating the transportation of goods and movement of persons on the regional network through taking action on a number of tracks, including the harmonization of basic transport infrastructure specifications, including the specifications for the regional road network, and that this is to be achieved through the preparation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq,

Noting the careful stages in which the draft agreement was prepared and the fact that its present form was reached after taking into consideration the comments of member countries,⁵

1. *Adopts* the draft agreement on international roads in the Arab Mashreq;
2. *Requests* the secretariat of ESCWA to intensify its endeavours and give the requisite priority to the development of the integrated transport system in the Arab Mashreq and facilitation of international commercial and passenger traffic in the region, with a view to benefiting from the increased volume of commercial and tourist exchanges between member countries and between the countries of the region and every country in the world;
3. *Urges* member countries to take the constitutional measures for ratification of the Agreement in order to ensure that it enters into force at the earliest opportunity.

3rd plenary meeting
11 May 2001

⁵ See document E/ESCWA/TRANS/2001/3. This contains the text of the Agreement, which was adopted by the Commission on 10 May 2001 and signed on the same day.