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**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION****FOLLOW-UP TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS
ADOPTED BY THE COMMISSION AT ITS TWENTY-THIRD SESSION****Summary**

Under this agenda item, a report is submitted to the Commission on follow-up to implementation of the Damascus Declaration on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals and all the other resolutions that were adopted by the Commission at its twenty-third session on the various issues of interest to member countries and on which the work of the Commission is focused. The resolutions are as set forth below:

- 254 (XXIII). The establishment of the ESCWA Technology Centre;
- 255 (XXIII). The establishment of a regional mechanism for building capacities to manage shared water resources;
- 256 (XXIII). Adoption of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq;
- 257 (XXIII). Selection of the routes to be given priority in implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq;
- 258 (XXIII). Strengthening technical cooperation in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia;
- 259 (XXIII). Social policies;
- 260 (XXIII). Development and regional cooperation under unstable conditions;
- 261 (XXIII). Strengthening the cooperation between ESCWA and the League of Arab States in the field of economic and social development;
- 262 (XXIII). Support for the capacities of member countries in the field of statistics and the international comparison programme;
- 263 (XXIII). Promoting partnership and resource mobilization;
- 264 (XXIII). Implementation of the Beirut Declaration on Arab Women Ten Years after Beijing: Call For Peace;
- 265 (XXIII). Regional cooperation in the field of road traffic safety;
- 266 (XXIII). Adoption of the draft programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium;
- 267 (XXIII). Adoption of the amendments made to the programme of work for the 2004-2005 biennium.

THE DAMASCUS DECLARATION ON THE REALIZATION OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1. On 12 May 2005, at the close of its twenty-third session, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) issued the Damascus Declaration on the Realization of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Declaration affirmed the importance of increasing economic growth and, with a view to realizing MDGs, linking that growth to the formulation of strategies for the eradication of poverty and unemployment and the achievement of social integration. The Declaration also (a) called upon the United Nations institutions that are working in the ESCWA region to coordinate and work together in order to meet regional needs and to focus on the progress of the region towards the realization of MDGs; (b) requested the secretariat to provide support to member countries in realizing MDGs, including by building national capacities to formulate policies, monitor the progress made, measure its impact and prepare regional reports; and (c) requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the progress made in that regard to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session. Pursuant to the Declaration, ESCWA undertook the following set of activities:

(a) In the context of coordinating and working with United Nations institutions, the United Nations Regional Coordination Group held its tenth meeting, which was organized by ESCWA, in Beirut, on 19 and 20 May 2005, where it was recommended that national capacities should be built for monitoring MDGs, including the development of statistics and indicators. The Group called on the lead agencies in the region to pursue collaborative initiatives and action in support of the achievement of MDGs. The regional report entitled "The Millennium Development Goals in the Arab region 2005" (E/ESCWA/SCU/2005/3), which was prepared by ESCWA, represents the outcome of the cooperative efforts made with the United Nations institutions that are working in the region, and aims to raise awareness of MDGs and improve capacities with respect to monitoring and reporting on progress made. The report set out the progress that has been made by the countries of the region towards achieving MDGs and identified many of the strategies that should be considered by countries in order to achieve the Goals by 2015. ESCWA will undertake follow-up to the work with member countries to determine the programme inputs that are necessary in order to honour the commitments that have been agreed upon;

ESCWA also participated in the Arab Societal Workshop on MDGs towards 2015: Achievements and Aspirations, which was organized by the League of Arab States (Cairo, 28-29 June 2005), and distributed to member countries the document that was issued by the Workshop entitled "The Arab Declaration on follow-up to MDGs", which was adopted by the Arab ministers for social affairs and planning at a meeting held on 30 June 2005;

(b) With respect to building the national capacities of member countries to achieve MDGs, ESCWA provided Qatar with technical assistance in preparing its national report. In cooperation with the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), ESCWA will implement a project aimed at increasing awareness of MDGs among Arab countries and building their statistical capacities for the preparation of MDG-related indicators and policies. Also in cooperation with UNDG, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Children's Fund, ESCWA organized a Regional Training of Trainers on DevInfo, which was held in Cairo from 4 to 8 December 2005. DevInfo is a software tool for tracking and monitoring MDGs.

Furthermore, ESCWA has established a Web page on MDGs on its Internet site, available at <http://www.escwa.org.lb/divisions/scu/main.asp>, which contains all the national reports that have been prepared by member countries; regional and international reports; guidelines for preparing national reports; and a link to an MDG database for member countries, available at <http://ssis.escwa.un.org/ssis/login.asp>;

(c) The secretariat has prepared a report on the progress made towards achieving MDGs in the Arab region, which will be submitted to the Commission under agenda item 6 (c), in document E/ESCWA/24/4(Part III). That report contains a brief review of the progress made by Arab countries towards achieving MDGs. Special sections are devoted to Iraq and Palestine, in view of the lack of stability and exceptional circumstances prevailing therein and the need for special efforts to be made in pursuit of MDGs.

Up-to-date information is given on the progress made by those two countries towards MDGs. The report also reviews development-related events in the Arab region and the challenges faced in achieving MDGs, in the light of the outcome of the 2005 World Summit.

**RESOLUTION 254 (XXIII). THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ESCWA
TECHNOLOGY CENTRE**

2. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 254 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on the establishment of the ESCWA Technology Centre. This resolution requested the Executive Secretary to undertake a detailed study, financed by extrabudgetary resources, on the establishment of the ESCWA Technology Centre, and to submit this study to the ESCWA Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation before submitting a report on the matter to the twenty-fourth session of the Commission.

3. In the course of three meetings held in June 2005, September 2005 and February 2006, the Executive Secretary conferred with the Advisory Committee of Ambassadors and with representatives of focal points of ESCWA member countries to follow up on the implementation of this resolution, and sought financial support for the study and the establishment of the Centre. Additionally, the Executive Secretary addressed several member countries and funding institutions, and invited them to host and/or support the Centre.

4. Equally, ESCWA examined the essential aspects for the establishment of the Centre and prepared a number of relevant reports. Based on these reports, the ESCWA Trust Fund for Regional Activities provided the necessary funding for a pre-feasibility study of the Centre, which was carried out by a multidisciplinary team from ESCWA aided by an external expert. A virtual panel of 35 international experts reviewed the study and produced an enhanced version that took into consideration the comments received.

5. The pre-feasibility study was reviewed by the third meeting of the ESCWA Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation (Beirut, 6 -7 March 2006). The Committee approved the study after introducing modifications aimed at enhancing the functions and potential benefits of the Centre. This final version of the study is submitted to the twenty-fourth session of the Commission for its consideration.

**RESOLUTION 255 (XXIII). THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL MECHANISM
FOR BUILDING CAPACITIES TO MANAGE SHARED
WATER RESOURCES**

6. At its twenty-third session, the Commission adopted resolution 255 (XXIII) dated 12 May 2005 concerning the establishment of a regional mechanism for building capacities to manage shared water resources. In that resolution the secretariat was requested to prepare a feasibility study, to be financed by extrabudgetary resources, on the establishment of a regional mechanism for building the capacities of member countries to manage shared water resources, and submit that study to the ESCWA Committee on Water Resources; the secretariat was urged to continue its efforts to support related activities and programmes; the Executive Secretary was requested to submit a report on the progress achieved in that regard to the twenty-fourth session of the Commission.

7. Pursuant to that resolution, the following action has been taken.

8. The secretariat prepared the terms of reference for a feasibility study that will highlight the need and justification for establishing such a mechanism, the proposed institutional framework, cost estimates and potential sources of funding, and assess risks and sustainability.

9. An expert was commissioned to carry out the feasibility study. Several meetings were held by the secretariat with the expert in order to discuss the most viable arrangement for establishing the proposed mechanism. A preliminary study on the feasibility of establishing the regional mechanism was subsequently

prepared by the expert, incorporating the outcome of those meetings. In that study, the following recommendations were made:

(a) A regional mechanism for building the capacities of member countries to manage shared water resources should be established in the form of a centre;

(b) The proposed centre should assist member countries to build national capacities in negotiation, prevention of water disputes, conflict resolution skills and management of international water resources. The centre should also provide advisory services and expertise on water-related issues;

(c) An implementation plan detailing how the centre should carry out its activities and achieve its objectives should be devised;

(d) Long-term funding for the centre should be sought at an early stage, in order to ensure sustainability.

10. The secretariat revised the study and posted it on its website, granting access to country representatives from the Committee on Water Resources and initiating an interactive e-forum where comments and views may be exchanged with the secretariat.

11. The preliminary study will be revised in the light of the feedback received through the e-forum. The amended document will be submitted for consideration to the seventh session of the Committee on Water Resources, which will be held in January 2007. The secretariat shall incorporate any amendments and/or observations by the Committee, and present the study to the Commission for consideration at its twenty-fifth session, to be held in 2008.

**RESOLUTION 256 (XXIII). ADOPTION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
ON COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF MARITIME TRANSPORT
IN THE ARAB MASHREQ**

12. The preparation by ESCWA of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq and its adoption by resolution 256 (XXIII) dated 12 May 2005¹ represent an outstanding achievement for the Commission in the field of maritime transport. The Memorandum is the first of its kind in the Arab region and at the United Nations regional commission level. ESCWA member countries adopted the Memorandum on 9 May 2005, at the twenty-third ESCWA session, and it was initialled in the presence of the United Nations Legal Counsel by the representatives of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. In New York on 31 December 2005, in the presence of the United Nations Secretary-General, Oman appended thereto a signature that requires verification.

13. In the aforementioned resolution, ESCWA urged member countries to sign and ratify the Memorandum of Understanding as soon as possible, and requested the Executive Secretary to follow up implementation of the resolution and report to the twenty-fourth session of the Commission.

14. Pursuant to the provisions of the resolution, the ESCWA Executive Secretary wrote to all member countries, including those that had initialled the Memorandum and those that had not, urging them to complete by 4 August 2005 the legal procedures for final signature and deposit of instruments of ratification with the United Nations Secretary-General.

15. ESCWA has been informed that the Council of Ministers of Yemen has approved, by resolution 196 of 2005, accession to the Memorandum, and the Syrian Arab Republic has ratified the Memorandum

¹ The final text of the Memorandum which was adopted by resolution 256 (XXIII) dated 12 May 2005 was issued in document E/ESCWA/GRID/2005/11 (English and Arabic) on 17 November 2005.

pursuant to legislative decree No. 4 dated 17 January 2006 and transmitted it to the permanent mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations in New York, in order for the necessary legal procedures to be taken for the deposit of the instrument of ratification. Bahrain, Iraq, Lebanon, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have conveyed the Memorandum to their respective official bodies for the taking of the legal and constitutional procedures necessary for accession thereto.

16. On 9 May 2005, Palestine appended to the Memorandum a final signature that needs no verification; and on 27 September 2005, 29 December 2005, and 24 February 2006 respectively, Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic deposited instruments of ratification with the United Nations Secretary-General. There are therefore four parties to the Memorandum, which will enter into force 90 days after the date on which five ESCWA member countries have either appended a definitive signature thereto or deposited instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

17. On the basis of the ongoing cooperation between ESCWA and the League of Arab States, the Memorandum was submitted to the Council of Arab Ministers of Transport at its eighteenth session, which was held in Damascus on 22 and 23 November 2005. The Council made the following statement:

“Note has been taken of the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Maritime Transport in the Arab Mashreq that was prepared by ESCWA and of the fact that related work is being extended under the aegis of the League of Arab States to include all the Arab countries. Those countries which have not signed the Memorandum are invited to study it, with a view to acceding thereto”.

**RESOLUTION 257 (XXIII). SELECTION OF THE ROUTES TO BE GIVEN
PRIORITY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT ON
INTERNATIONAL ROADS IN THE ARAB MASHREQ**

18. The twenty-third session of the Commission adopted resolution 257 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on the selection of the routes to be given priority in implementation of the Agreement on International Roads in the Arab Mashreq. The resolution adopted routes M40 and M45 as priority routes for the implementation of that Agreement and requested member countries through whose territories these routes pass to accelerate preparation of a detailed plan of action for the projects that must be carried out in respect of those routes, complete that plan by 30 September 2007 at the latest, and begin taking the measures necessary to develop the routes to the standard required under the Agreement as soon as possible. Furthermore, the resolution requested the secretariat to provide technical assistance in the preparation of the plans of action relating to those routes and follow up their implementation, and requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report on this issue to the Commission at its twenty-fifth session.

19. Concrete steps have already been taken towards the implementation of this resolution. Immediately following its adoption, the secretariat identified experts from all seven countries through which the priority routes M40 and M45 pass to prepare detailed plans of action for the implementation of the resolution in their respective countries. Specifically, M40 runs from the border between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Iraq in the east to the border between Egypt and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in the west, thereby passing through Iraq, Jordan, Palestine and Egypt; while M45 runs from the border between Turkey and the Syrian Arab Republic in the north to Yemen in the south, thereby crossing the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

20. To date, six member countries have prepared their plans of action for implementing the resolution, which were discussed at length during the Expert Group Meeting on Transport Facilitation for Regional Integration (Beirut, 5-6 December 2005). Moreover, ESCWA, with the assistance of an expert, prepared a consolidated report of these six detailed plans of action, which was subsequently discussed at the seventh session of the Committee on Transport (Beirut, 17-19 April 2006). This report will be updated periodically based on progress made by member countries in the implementation of the resolution. The report of the seventh session of the Committee on Transport is contained in document E/ESCWA/24/5(Part V).

RESOLUTION 258 (XXIII). STRENGTHENING TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA

21. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 258 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on strengthening technical cooperation in the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. This resolution requested the Executive Secretary to take all necessary measures to implement the ESCWA Technical Cooperation (TC) Strategy; to establish a technical cooperation information and knowledge-sharing network with member countries, with a view to strengthening and coordinating technical cooperation activities; and to submit a report to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session on the progress achieved in the implementation of the ESCWA TC Strategy and to inform it of any amendments made thereto.

22. As revealed by the initial experience of its implementation over the past months, the TC Strategy is relevant and coherent, and responds to the needs of member countries. Implementation of the TC Strategy is proceeding normally, with the first steps focused on clarifying the strategic position of ESCWA and on building the internal capacity of ESCWA aimed at planning and managing technical cooperation. The progress achieved in technical cooperation is contextualized in two reports of the Executive Secretary on the activities of the Commission, namely: "Programme performance report for the biennium 2004-2005 (E/ESCWA/24/5(Part I)); and "Technical cooperation: the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation and the Development Account" (E/ESCWA/24/5(Part III)).

23. With a view to strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of ESCWA technical cooperation services, a number of measures were taken that are summarized below.

24. The strategic position of ESCWA was clarified in the following ways:

(a) Efforts towards technical cooperation development focused increasingly on the priority areas of the Commission, thereby linking the analytical and normative work with operational activities;

(b) Focus on the regional approach became more targeted, notwithstanding the immediate results revealed by country-based projects, in particular for Iraq, where ESCWA operated within the United Nations integrated framework that comprises 19 United Nations agencies. Additionally, there were positive developments concerning technical cooperation in Palestine and Yemen;

(c) Interregional cooperation and south-south cooperation increased, in particular through the Development Account projects as indicated in E/ESCWA/24/5(Part III);

(d) Technical cooperation activities became more diversified, especially with respect to capacity-building workshops under the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC) and field projects, which effectively translated the findings of the analytical work of ESCWA and linked them to prevailing realities in the field.

25. Moreover, ESCWA adopted means aimed at improving the effectiveness and efficiency of technical cooperation management by improving planning, monitoring and evaluation; and by strengthening capacity, with the focus on identifying and clarifying roles and responsibilities, and knowledge management.

26. In the area of improving planning, ESCWA introduced and enforced an improved project-planning process, including awareness-raising and training sessions for all concerned staff. As a result, there is currently a more participatory process and better integration of planning and budgeting using, as a basis, a standardized project concept paper applied to all project ideas across the board. For example, the project documents for the Development Account projects, which are based on concept papers approved by the General Assembly, are developed with due consideration towards improving linkages and strengthening synergies between the programme of work and the RPTC, on one hand, and the project activities, on the other.

27. In parallel to the RPTC, ESCWA introduced needs assessment and priority setting for the annual planning of work of regional advisers. Special attention was given to improving the coordination in planning and implementation between the work of the substantive divisions and regional advisers. In an effort to improve the delivery of technical cooperation services, in conformity with the TC Strategy, the RPTC is reviewed and adjusted annually in order to emphasize the translation of the findings of ESCWA research and analysis activities into operational activities; to highlight the complementarities between normative and analytical work and technical cooperation activities; and to address better the requests of member countries for assistance in the field of socio-economic development and other emerging issues.

28. In terms of monitoring and evaluation, ESCWA promoted and increased the use of the electronic technical cooperation monitoring system (e-TC) and the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) in project monitoring; established an internal management information system on monitoring and evaluation of technical cooperation projects, thereby ensuring the timely access by management to information; and succeeded in furthering monitoring and evaluation of technical cooperation activities to ensure efficient and effective delivery of outputs in line with global requirements.

29. Among salient achievements in this respect is the generalization of the TC annual progress reporting and completion reporting whereby the compliance rate of 50 per cent in 2004 was raised to 83 per cent in 2005, with due emphasis given to the collection of evaluative evidence. As a result, the project portfolio of ESCWA in the past year was cleared from backlog and rationalized whereby, out of 77 projects active in 2004-2005, 37 projects were operationally and financially closed, and another 20 projects were operationally completed at the end of 2005. There is now a new situation and real possibility for developing ESCWA's technical cooperation programme in line with the TC Strategy.

30. In the area of strengthening technical cooperation capacity, while taking into account well-defined and focused roles and responsibilities, the Commission revisited its internal policy with respect to recruitment and mobilization of human resources. To that end and with a view to ensuring greater flexibility and timeliness in accommodating technical assistance, while maintaining the highest standards of quality, ESCWA adopted the following mechanisms:

(a) A more effective combination of long- and short-term advisers;

(b) The establishment of a roster of short-term advisers;

(c) Reassessment, in terms of requirements, of TC support positions, which represent the cornerstone for managing, coordinating and supporting ESCWA TC activities and services. According to such requirements, all the current support positions will be recruited again by mid-2006;

(d) Internal knowledge management through the increased use of internal databases, including e-TC and IMIS, and the promotion of good practices and lessons learned.

31. Additionally, ESCWA increased the focus on external communication in the following ways:

(a) Promoting and intensifying initial efforts aimed at profiling ESCWA as a provider of technical cooperation services;

(b) Maintaining and developing a process of continuous dialogue with clients and direct beneficiaries that was initiated with a view to ensuring a participatory approach to technical cooperation. This process will be facilitated through the knowledge-sharing network that is currently being established;

(c) Strengthening public information on technical cooperation through, inter alia, Internet sites, pamphlets and success stories.

32. In terms of developing a strategic partnership approach, ESCWA has established and will systematically develop a database on clients. Moreover, ESCWA pursued cooperation with other United Nations agencies, including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework – Common Country Assessment (UNDAF/CCA) in Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen; and with the country offices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Those linkages must be institutionalized in order to ensure coherence in the delivery of technical cooperation at the national level.

33. Equally, the management and mobilization of resources were improved, as set forth in the proposed multi-year funding plan (E/ESCWA/24/5(Part IV)/Add.1).

34. As ESCWA strengthens its strategic positioning on TC and as TC management systems and capacity are rebuilt and developed, the focus of implementation of the TC Strategy will, in the next phase, increasingly shift towards TC programme development.

35. Furthermore, action towards the establishment of a technical cooperation management knowledge-sharing network with member countries was initiated. Exploratory contacts were made in selected member countries in the RPTC evaluation missions in the fourth quarter of 2005. At the request of the Executive Secretary, member countries were invited in February 2006 to nominate a national focal point for technical cooperation. The focal point will be entrusted with follow-up on TC in general and on the RPTC in particular, and specifically to discuss and agree on the most efficient process aimed at identifying national priorities, while taking into account the regional dimension; identify opportunities for advisory support at the regional level; follow up on the implementation of recommendations by regional advisers; and share information and knowledge at the national and regional levels. A meeting of national focal points will be convened in the second quarter of 2006 to launch the technical cooperation management knowledge network.

RESOLUTION 259 (XXIII). SOCIAL POLICIES

36. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 259 (XXIII) dated 12 May 2005 concerning social policies. In that resolution, the Commission called upon member countries to cooperate with the secretariat in implementing the next stage of the integrated social policies programme, which requires coordination at the national level in order to find the best ways of formulating social policies that are appropriate to each country and its particularities; requested the Executive Secretary to present the national reports on social policies that were being prepared by the Commission to member countries for adoption with the proviso that those reports should be updated and submitted in their amended form to the Committee on Social Development; and further requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the progress made in that field to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session.

37. Pursuant to that resolution, the secretariat has undertaken a variety of activities, a brief review of which is set forth below.

38. With respect to the strengthening of member country capacities to formulate integrated social policies and identify the relevant conceptual and practical frameworks, ESCWA issued a study entitled: *Towards integrated social policies in Arab countries*.² The aim of the study was to amplify the data available to decision makers and others involved in the analysis of social policies, and acquaint them with ways of strengthening the integration and effectiveness of such policies in the Arab countries. ESCWA also prepared reports on social policies in its member countries, by commissioning one expert from each of those countries to prepare a report on social policies in the country concerned. Once the reports had been completed, they were sent to the Governments for review and approval of their contents. The secretariat then revised the reports on economic policies on the basis of the observations made by the countries. The reports detail the status of such basic social services as health and education, and the situation with respect to employment, poverty and social safety nets, together with the requirements for their improvement. They also describe the

² ESCWA, *Towards integrated social policies in Arab countries*, E/ESCWA/SDD/2005/4.

mechanisms used in the formulation of social policy, the financial and human resources allocated thereto and the conditions required for their development. The reports will be submitted in their amended form to the Committee on Social Development at its sixth session, which is to be held in February 2007.

39. As part of the follow-up to the third phase of the integrated social policies programme and in view of the particular importance accorded to that programme by Bahrain, ESCWA has concluded a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Social Development of that country concerning cooperation and coordination in social policy-related fields, which was signed on 18 December 2005 at the headquarters of the League of Arab States in Cairo, during a meeting of Arab ministers of social affairs. In that memorandum, it was recommended that the Ministry of Social Affairs should change its name to the Ministry of Social Development; that a social policy unit should be established in the Ministry; that a social database should be established; that a study on social policies in Bahrain should be prepared; that a national conference on social policies should be convened; and that capacity-building and training programmes for the purposes of social policies should be prepared and implemented.

40. Pursuant to the memorandum, ESCWA will in April 2006 hold a national conference on strengthening social policies in Bahrain, which will consider a number of important social policy-related issues, including social legislation and the extent to which it is consistent with international conventions; the impact of economic development on the social aspect; social safety nets; and the role in the country of governmental and non-governmental institutions. It should be noted that the integrated social policies programme enjoys the attention of other member countries, including Jordan, Oman, Palestine and Saudi Arabia. The secretariat will exert every endeavour with all member countries and, in particular, those which have expressed special interest in the integrated social policies programme, with a view to achieving the way of implementing the programme that is most appropriate to the particularities of each country, appointing a permanent coordinator for discussion of the programme; and adopting the procedures necessary for implementation and follow-up.

RESOLUTION 260 (XXIII). DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL COOPERATION UNDER UNSTABLE CONDITIONS

41. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 260 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on development and regional cooperation under unstable conditions. In that resolution, the Commission urged the secretariat to provide early warning of the potential dangers posed by lack of security in the region to economic and social development and regional integration; hoped that the secretariat would intensify its endeavours aimed at building capacities and at providing the requisite support for the countries of the region that suffer from lack of stability; and requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the progress made in this regard to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session.

42. Pursuant to that resolution, ESCWA has undertaken various activities aimed at analysing and forecasting potential threats resulting from political turmoil and lack of security. Specifically, the Unit for Emerging and Conflict Related Issues (ECRI) was established in January 2006 in order to consolidate the activities of the task forces on Iraq, Palestine and Southern Lebanon, and monitor and address emerging socio-economic challenges associated with the volatile political realities and crisis conditions in countries and territories afflicted by conflict. Within that context, ESCWA is regularly monitoring and analysing political and socio-economic developments, and focusing on the extent to which such events affect socio-economic development, particularly in terms of hindering the achievement MDGs and regional integration.

43. In response to resolutions by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, ESCWA also submits, on behalf of the Secretary-General, an annual report on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan.

44. Moreover, ESCWA implemented capacity-building initiatives and assisted in the establishment of national and regional partnerships to support socio-economic development in politically volatile and conflict-stricken areas.

45. With the aim of building the capacities of institutions in Palestine, ESCWA organized a series of training courses for the Palestine Standards Institution on Standardization, Technical Regulations and Inspections (Ramallah, 21-28 August 2005); and organized the Workshop on Project Development (Ramallah, 13-20 December 2005), which aimed at building the capacities of senior staff of various ministries in Palestine.

46. Particular attention was also given to Iraq. ESCWA organized eight management-training workshops in that country, which benefited 102 senior Iraqi civil servants in the Ministries of Housing and Construction, Municipalities and Public Works, Justice, and Human Rights, and in the municipalities of Baghdad, Basra and Erbil.

47. Additionally, a series of initiatives were launched aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and integration and building human resource capacities through an array of partnerships between Government and civil society institutions, as well as with multilateral organizations.

48. ESCWA and CISCO, a supplier of networking hardware and software, have collaborated in equipping four Regional Networking Academies and six Local Networking Academies to train Iraqis on modern information technology (IT) networking. Moreover, ESCWA is implementing the Smart Community Project for Iraq. In partnership with local organizations, multipurpose technology community centres are being set up to act as vehicles for the delivery of a wide range of interventions targeting employment and skill creation using new technologies.

49. In Lebanon and Palestine, ESCWA entered into partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector to support rehabilitation. Specifically, ESCWA, the Arab NGO Network for Development and the Palestinian NGO Network are in the process of establishing a partnership mechanism aimed at formulating and implementing socio-economic development activities in Palestine; and the Arab-Palestinian Civil Society Coalition was founded in November 2005. Partnership mechanisms were also established for the rehabilitation and development of the Palestinian agro-food and agro-business sectors. In Lebanon, ESCWA has instituted a partnership with a local NGO, namely, Saradar Foundation, and Bank Audi in the private sector for the funding, operation and management of the E-Caravan Project in South Lebanon. The Project is a fully-equipped mobile IT school, which will travel across remote regions in South Lebanon to provide IT training.

**RESOLUTION 261 (XXIII). STRENGTHENING THE COOPERATION BETWEEN ESCWA
AND THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES IN THE FIELD OF ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

50. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 261 (XXIII) dated 12 May 2005 concerning the strengthening of cooperation between ESCWA and the League of Arab States in the field of economic and social development. That resolution called for a strategic partnership to be forged between ESCWA and the League of Arab States based on the comparative advantages enjoyed by each organization; and requested the Executive Secretary to submit to the League of Arab States her views on means of developing their cooperation in all economic and social sectors and to submit a copy of her proposals with a report to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session on the progress of the cooperation arrangements between the two bodies.

51. Pursuant to the provisions of the resolution, the secretariat undertook a set of activities aimed at strengthening strategic partnership between the two organizations. The Executive Secretary duly submitted

her views³ on means of developing cooperation and increasing coordination between the two organizations to the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States. On the basis of the existing cooperation between the two bodies, established in a 1983 memorandum of understanding, those views include a set of practical proposals for developing cooperation, foremost among which is signature of a memorandum of understanding that draws up the general framework for activating cooperation and identifying fields, priorities, programmes of work and joint activities and projects for implementation. The Executive Secretary's views included a call for the organizations to hold an annual meeting in order to consider issues of mutual interest; integrate their programmes of work on the basis of the comparative advantages enjoyed by each; harmonize views on development issues and regional and global events; and review and evaluate progress made in implementing cooperative activities. The Executive Secretary also proposed that invitations to attend all meetings held by each party should be exchanged; meetings, seminars and training sessions should be jointly organized; studies, research and field projects should be carried out cooperatively; and the necessary funds for the implementation of joint activities and projects should be found.

52. The Executive Secretary's views were included in the agenda of the seventy-seventh regular session of the League's Social and Economic Council, (Abu Dhabi, 13-16 February 2006), with a view to an appropriate decision being taken in their regard. On 16 February 2006, the Council adopted resolution 1611/77 concerning the activation of cooperation between ESCWA and the League of Arab States. That resolution stated that a memorandum of understanding should be concluded between ESCWA and the League of Arab States on the mechanisms for economic and social cooperation. The secretariat received from the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States a letter informing it of the resolution adopted by the Council and affirming that the General Secretariat would at the earliest possible opportunity cooperate with the ESCWA secretariat in completing a memorandum of understanding to be submitted to the Social and Economic Council at its forthcoming session in September 2006. The secretariat will continue to follow up implementation of the resolution and will submit a report on the developments and achievements in that regard to the Commission at its twenty-fifth session.

³ The full text of the Executive Secretary's views is contained in the annex to this part.

Annex

**VIEWS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION BETWEEN ESCWA
AND THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES**

1. ESCWA should participate in the specialized ministerial councils established by the League of Arab States and, in particular, in those fields in which the two parties currently cooperate, namely, transport, communications, information technology, trade, social and environmental affairs, energy, statistics and capacity-building.
2. ESCWA should participate in the meetings of the League's Social and Economic Council.
3. The programmes of work of each party should be integrated and roles assigned on the basis of the comparative advantages enjoyed by each organization and existing cooperation, with a view to strengthening that cooperation and expanding it to include other fields.
4. Meetings, seminars and training sessions should be jointly organized and studies, research and field projects should be carried out cooperatively.
5. Mutual endeavours should be made to find the necessary funds for the implementation of activities and projects that the two parties have agreed to undertake.
6. Arab countries which are not members of ESCWA should be invited to consider acceding to agreements that are concluded and signed at ESCWA meetings and sessions.
7. A strategic partnership should be forged by issuing the representatives of each party with standing orders to carry on ongoing consultations in an institutional framework, rather than on an ad hoc basis, with a view to intensifying cooperation.
8. Invitations to attend all the meetings, conferences, seminars, round tables and workshops held by each party should be exchanged on a regular basis.
9. The Executive Secretary of ESCWA should be invited to attend the regular meetings held by the League Council at the summit and ministerial levels.
10. Both organizations should hold an annual meeting in order to consider issues of mutual interest and ways of increasing mechanisms for coordination and the expansion of horizons; integrate efforts to revive the Arab region; harmonize views on development issues and regional and global events; and review and evaluate progress made in implementing cooperative activities.
11. A memorandum of understanding should be concluded whereby the general framework is drawn up for activating cooperation and identifying economic and social fields, priorities, programmes of work, and joint activities and projects for implementation.

**RESOLUTION 262 (XXIII). SUPPORT FOR THE CAPACITIES OF MEMBER COUNTRIES
IN THE FIELD OF STATISTICS AND THE INTERNATIONAL
COMPARISON PROGRAMME**

53. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 262 (XXIII) dated 12 May 2005 concerning support for the capacities of member countries in the field of statistics and the International Comparison Programme. In that resolution, the Commission called upon member countries to adopt national statistical strategies aimed at providing the data and indicators necessary to measure progress made towards economic and social development goals and, in particular, towards MDGs; to issue, once every two years at least, a national statistical report that shows the progress made towards MDGs; to mainstream International Comparison Programme (ICP) operations in their national statistical programmes and their organizational structures; and to strengthen the capacities of their statistical bodies to conduct the sectoral surveys necessary to apply the bases for the preparation of national accounts in accordance with the United Nations System of National Accounts 1993. The Commission also expressed in the resolution its support for the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses, which aims to establish databases on the demographic, social and economic particularities of populations that may be used in international comparisons; requested the secretariat to provide consultancy services to member countries in the field of economic, social and environmental statistics; and requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the progress made in implementing this resolution to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session.

54. Pursuant to the resolution, the secretariat has undertaken a variety of activities, a brief review of which is set forth below.

55. With respect to the adoption of national statistical strategies, the ESCWA secretariat has invited member countries to cooperate with Partnership in statistics for development in the twenty-first century (Paris 21) and the World Bank in preparing national strategies that aim to provide data and indicators for use in measuring progress towards the achievement of MDGs. The Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen have both prepared national statistical strategies, while Jordan and Lebanon are currently conducting negotiations with the World Bank with respect to the preparation of such strategies. Oman is currently preparing its strategy. ESCWA has requested Paris 21 to provide all member countries with support in the preparation of their national strategies. In cooperation with the Secretariat General of the Planning Council of Qatar, ESCWA organized the Second Symposium on Statistics for Development: A dialogue between users and producers, was held (Doha, 16-19 May 2005) at which agreement was reached on a set of recommendations regarding implementation of the five-year statistical plan.

56. In support of the efforts exerted by member countries with a view to monitoring their progress towards the achievement of MDGs and publishing the relevant national reports, ESCWA acted as the main coordinator between the United Nations organizations in the region with regard to the preparation of a report on MDGs in the Arab region in 2005.⁴ ESCWA provided Qatar with technical consultancy in its preparation of its national report on achievement of MDGs, and contributed to the 2005 report of the United Nations Secretary-General on MDGs.⁵ It has begun implementation of an MDG statistical awareness project that aims to build statistical capacities for monitoring the Goals by developing and making available a national database. Against that background, ESCWA organized a regional workshop for the training of trainers from Arab statistical bodies in the use of the DevInfo software for the collation and presentation of MDG-related statistics, which was held in Cairo from 4 to 9 November 2005. The Commission continues to update its database on the demographic, social and economic characteristics of its member countries, which includes MDG indicators, available on its Internet site at: <http://www.escwa.org.lb/divisions/scu/main.asp>, for the use of decision makers, policy formulators, researchers and other users.

57. With respect to the mainstreaming by member countries of ICP operations in their national statistical programmes, the ESCWA secretariat, with financial support from the Arab Fund for Economic and Social

⁴ *The Millennium Development Goals in the Arab Region 2005*, E/ESCWA/SCU/2005/3/Rev.1.

⁵ United Nations, *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2005* (Sales No. E.05.II.6).

Development and the World Bank, participated in two meetings of national regional coordinators and two workshops for trainers, the first of which, held in May 2005, was devoted to a review of data on food, drink and tobacco for the first quarter of 2005, laying the basis for a set of data on non-consumables, including building, institutions and Government offices, and training participants in the use of the data analysis unit and the Quaranta table. The second workshop, held in December 2005, reviewed data for the second quarter of 2005 through the medium of the Quaranta table and Dikhanov diagnostic tables. The regional team is preparing for a workshop, to be held in 2006, to review data for the third and fourth quarters of 2005 and train participants on collecting prices for the construction and equipment group. Experts will be invited to attend in order to discuss national accounts and methods of preparing the basic headings.

58. In regard to national accounts, ESCWA trained national staff in Kuwait in the various classifications relevant to national accounts and is carrying out an evaluation of the current situation in the field of national accounts, identifying statistical gaps and making proposals for the questionnaires related to economic surveys in the Syrian Arab Republic. It is also evaluating the status of financial statistics and a methodology for calculating comparative figures for consumer prices, as well as a mechanism for calculating levels of inflation and a methodology and means of implementing industrial sector statistics in the United Arab Emirates. A study was completed on the status of the statistical data available for the preparation of national account estimates and evaluation of the final outcomes of economic surveys. In Yemen, a mechanism for developing and implementing such surveys has been put in place, along with a methodology for preparing overall local outcomes.

59. As part of its support for the 2010 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses, ESCWA organized a meeting of the Regional Taskforce on 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, which was held in Cairo on 12 and 13 November 2005 to discuss emerging issues and core topics used in the collection of data related to population and housing censuses and review the standards, concepts and definitions used and the extent to which they conform to the international standards. With a preliminary contribution from Oman, a fund was set up within ESCWA in order to support activities related to 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses. ESCWA also organized an expert group meeting on international migration statistics, which was held in Cairo from 14 to 16 November 2005 with the aim of supporting statistical capacities to collect data for the measurement of international migration in accordance with recommendations.

60. The secretariat has undertaken several consultancies in a number of statistical fields, including providing technical advice in respect of labour market needs surveys, the development of databases for the preparation of social indicators, and international trade in services statistics.

RESOLUTION 263 (XXIII). PROMOTING PARTNERSHIP AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

61. At its twenty third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 263 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on promoting partnership and resource mobilization. In that resolution, the secretariat was requested to identify, establish and develop strategic partnerships and undertake collaborative initiatives with regional and international donors in the priority areas of work; and to prepare a multi-year funding plan and submit it to the twenty-fourth session of the Commission.

62. Since May 2005, ESCWA has intensified efforts to respond to the requests of member countries as formulated in resolution 263 (XXIII) and has made progress in the implementation of that resolution.

63. Specifically, ESCWA has promoted the idea of developing strategic partnerships with centres of excellence in the region aimed at firmly rooting action in specific substantive fields and at increasing capacity in pursuit of a common vision and agenda within the region. In certain highly technical or specialized areas, partnership arrangements could be pursued with centres of excellence at the global level. This approach is explored within the context of implementing the 2006-2007 work programme in order to strengthen the core substantive capacity. These strategic partnerships are also expected to improve prospects for resource mobilization.

64. Since the twenty-third session, a number of cooperative and partnership arrangements were concluded and/or reaffirmed, including as follows:

(a) Cooperating with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on the management of shared groundwater in the region under the Internationally Shared Aquifer Resources Management initiative;

(b) Enhancing the capacity of concerned officials on Integrated Water Resources Management, with the cooperation of the Federal Institute for Geosciences and Natural Resources of Germany, the League of Arab States and the United Nations Environment Programme, Regional Office for West Asia (UNEP/ROWA);

(c) Promoting the global Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development;

(d) Fostering Arab-Palestinian partnerships and networking arrangements between Palestinian NGOs and Arab and international counterparts; and jointly implementing the initiatives adopted during the Arab-International Forum on Rehabilitation and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (Beirut, 11-14 October 2004);

(e) Monitoring the progress made in achieving MDGs at the national and regional levels with UNDG.

65. Further to this resolution, ESCWA also convened a donor information meeting on 21 June 2005 to raise awareness of its technical cooperation strategy and programme, and initiate a process of dialogue on funding requirements and possibilities for collaborative action. The meeting resulted in increased interest by donor institutions in ESCWA field projects. Throughout the biennium 2006-2007, the Commission will intensify its efforts in this respect and follow up continuously with potential donors through bilateral contacts and meetings at various levels.

66. Pursuant to the resolution, the secretariat also prepared the "Proposed multi-year funding plan" (E/ESCWA/24/5(Part IV)), which is submitted to the twenty-fourth session of the Commission for its consideration under item 7 (d) of the provisional agenda.

RESOLUTION 264 (XXIII). IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIRUT DECLARATION ON ARAB WOMEN TEN YEARS AFTER BEIJING: CALL FOR PEACE

67. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 261 (XXIII) dated 12 May 2005 concerning implementation of the Beirut Declaration on Arab Women Ten Years After Beijing: Call for Peace, which stressed the need to implement that Declaration and follow-up implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the forthcoming decade. The resolution requested member countries to adopt policies that take into consideration gender issues and to put in place national strategies for the empowerment of women and the institutional frameworks for their implementation, with a view to mainstreaming women's issues into activities, policies and programmes, in keeping with the relevant Arab and international agreements, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It also called upon member countries to intensify efforts aimed at implementing the Declaration and following up implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, and to take the measures necessary to prepare national reports on the progress made and obstacles faced in that regard. It further requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session on the progress made in implementing the resolution.

68. The Beirut Declaration was issued by the second session of the Committee on Women (Beirut, 8-10 July 2004). It represents a working document and road map for Arab Government and non-government institutions and ESCWA to use in following up implementation of commitments in the forthcoming decade. The recommendations made to Governments by the Declaration covered a wide range of issues related to the

empowerment of women, including national legislation, political participation, mainstreaming the gender perspective into development policies, the adoption of methods to ensure women's empowerment, the building of NGO capacities, the strengthening of partnerships between NGOs and Government institutions, and the changing of the flawed perceptions that distort the image of Arab women.

69. As part of ESCWA support to member countries in monitoring the progress made in implementing the Declaration and meeting their needs in that respect, the secretariat is preparing a questionnaire to monitor the practical endeavours exerted by member countries, their strategies and future programmes. The aim of the questionnaire is to establish and evaluate achievements and to design a plan for future implementation of Declaration recommendations. The secretariat will submit the outcome of the questionnaire to the third session of the Committee on Women, which will be held in November 2006.

70. ESCWA has also actively assisted member countries in preparing gender-related policies, national strategies for the empowerment of women and the institutional frameworks for their implementation. Activities in that field have included the holding of training workshops and consultancies that addressed the following issues:

(a) Assistance in preparing national reports on application of CEDAW in Bahrain, Lebanon, Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic;

(b) Capacity-building for national committees and Government centres responsible for women's issues;

(c) Strategic planning in Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and the Syrian Arab Republic for the formulation of a common vision for the operation of national mechanisms and the determination of specific and clear perspectives based on clear-cut plans of action and programmes, the impact of which may be measured and evaluated;

(d) Raising awareness of the gender perspective and increasing the capacities of member countries to incorporate it into national strategies and policies in Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Palestine, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen;

(e) Women's political participation in Iraq.

71. Pursuant to the Declaration, ESCWA will include workshops and seminars for women working in the media in its forthcoming programme of work, and will prepare a comprehensive guide that includes the names of prominent intellectuals, media personalities and researchers, to facilitate cooperation with them in that programme of work. Women in such Asian countries as Indonesia and the Philippines that have experienced successes in the field will be invited to participate in a meeting for the interchange of expertise between national women's machineries.

72. With respect to the recommendation concerning coordination between ESCWA, other United Nations organizations and comparable specialist Arab organizations with a view to preparing the NGO report on evaluation of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and incorporating it into the Government report, ESCWA has taken the first step, namely, the preparation of a matrix that shows the jurisdiction and particularities of the organizations concerned, in order to identify possible areas of cooperation. As part of the ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007, the secretariat will prepare a study on that issue.

RESOLUTION 265 (XXIII). REGIONAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF ROAD TRAFFIC SAFETY

73. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 265 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on regional cooperation in the field of road traffic safety. In that resolution, the Commission urged member countries to link the issue of road safety to their development programmes and increase awareness of traffic safety

measures; to participate in the activities that ESCWA will carry out on good traffic safety practices and on preparations for the Global Road Safety Week to be held in the week of 23-29 April 2007; and to participate in any General Assembly discussions on this issue. The resolution also requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report on its implementation to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session.

74. ESCWA has taken a number of steps set forth below.

75. A detailed status report was prepared to review the status of road safety in selected countries of the ESCWA region (E/ESCWA/GRID/2005/6). Given the lack of funds needed to cover all member countries, certain countries were chosen for inclusion in the first stage of that report, namely, Jordan, Lebanon and the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council. The selection of these countries was based on the availability of relevant data and statistics from the Internet. Field visits were carried out to some of the selected member countries in order to assess and advise on ways to improve traffic safety conditions. The report covered several key issues relating to road safety, including legislation related to road safety, licences and driver instructions, road accident statistics, awareness of road safety and road education programmes; and concluded with an analysis of the current status of road safety in the countries examined. The next stage of the review, which comprises a second report covering the remaining ESCWA member countries, is set to be undertaken in the current biennium.

76. In an effort to illustrate and promote good practices in road traffic safety, ESCWA and the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) jointly organized the Workshop on the Implementation of Good Practices in Road Traffic Safety (Muscat, 28-29 November 2005). The Workshop, which was attended by traffic safety officials from ESCWA member countries, experts from international safety bodies and representatives of civil society groups dealing with traffic safety in the region, aimed to familiarize participants with internationally recognized good practices in road safety and with the mechanisms required for introducing and implementing such mechanisms in the ESCWA region. The participants benefited from such reference material as related lectures, pamphlets and manuals on good practices, and recommended the organization of a follow-up workshop. In addition, the meeting addressed the preparations for the Global Road Safety Week to be held in the week of 23-29 April 2007, and the activities that need to be undertaken by member countries in order to ensure the success of that international event.

77. A questionnaire on the status of the use of seat belts and child car seats was translated into Arabic and submitted to ESCWA member countries in order to assess the situation and make recommendations. The questionnaire focused mainly on current legislations governing the usage of such safety restraints, enforcement techniques and the level of public awareness on the issue. To date, a total of seven member countries have responded to the questionnaire, namely, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen. Once replies have been received from the remaining countries, a report will be prepared in an attempt to enhance the usage of seat belts and child car seats in the countries of the region.

78. In order to assist its member countries in raising awareness on traffic safety measures, ESCWA cooperated with the Global Road Safety Partnership to translate into Arabic the booklet by the World Road Association, entitled "Keep death off your roads", which was subsequently distributed to children in a number of schools.

79. Moreover, within the framework of the collaboration with United Nations entities on road safety issues, ESCWA has actively participated in the three collaboration meetings that have been held to date, including the Third United Nations Road Safety Collaboration Meeting (London, 14-15 November 2005), which was hosted by FIA. At that Meeting, it was decided that ESCWA would assume the role of regional coordinator for the activities to be undertaken during the Global Road Safety Week. Additionally, ESCWA is a member of the central steering committee responsible for the activities to be held during that event.

80. In order to streamline and bring about a unified regional approach to road safety in line with international standards, ESCWA proposes the development of a regional technical cooperation programme that addresses the issue of road safety and its implementation in partnership with United Nations entities and

international, regional and national organizations specialized in traffic safety issues. The technical cooperation programme has been proposed in view of the findings of the study carried out by ESCWA on road traffic safety, the recommendations of the regional workshops and the large number of requests received from member countries for the provision of technical assistance and services in this area.

**RESOLUTION 266 (XXIII). ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT PROGRAMME
OF WORK FOR THE 2006-2007 BIENNIUM**

81. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 266 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on the adoption of the draft programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium. The resolution requested the secretariat to distribute the programme budget to member countries after it had been adopted by the General Assembly. It further requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report to the Commission at its twenty-fourth session on the progress made in implementing the programme of work and to inform it of any amendments made thereto.

82. Pursuant to this resolution, document E/ESCWA/24/6(Part II) contains changes to the programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium which have been proposed in the light of emerging global and regional issues, including the key concerns and priorities underscored by the 2005 World Summit. The Commission is invited to consider and endorse the proposed changes before they are incorporated into the programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium.

**RESOLUTION 267 (XXIII). ADOPTION OF THE AMENDMENTS MADE
TO THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE 2004-2005 BIENNIUM**

83. At its twenty-third session, ESCWA adopted resolution 267 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on the adoption of the amendments made to the programme of work for the 2004-2005 biennium. In that resolution, the Commission requests the Executive Secretary to follow up implementation of that programme of work and include also in it, as necessary, activities that address any changes that may take place in the ESCWA region. The resolution requests the Executive Secretary to include information on any further amendments made to the programme of work in the report on progress made in implementing the programme of work for the 2004-2005 biennium that will be distributed to member countries.

84. Pursuant to this resolution, document E/ESCWA/24/5(Part I) highlights results achieved and lessons learned in the 2004-2005 biennium, including the results of each of the six substantive subprogrammes and, for the first time, of the executive direction and management.
