

**245 (XXII). THE ESCWA INITIATIVE FOR ACTIVATING THE ROLE OF SCIENCE,
TECHNOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION
IN ACHIEVING THE MILLENNIUM GOALS**

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Aware of the importance of science, technology and technological innovation in achieving the Millennium Goals and, in particular, the alleviation of unemployment and poverty,

Noting the positive impact of science, technology and technological innovation, as part of the knowledge-based global economy, on the transfer to an information society and on the creation of new employment opportunities and the alleviation of poverty,

Considering it necessary to promote research and development activities in the ESCWA member countries and for those countries to coordinate in the fields to which they accord priority,

Aware of the opportunities offered by the new technologies for establishing systems for education, vocational training and the alleviation of poverty and for providing poor and marginalized societies with valuable chances for employment in new areas,

1. *Adopts* the recommendations made by the Forum on Technology, Employment and Poverty Alleviation in the Arab Countries that was held in Beirut on 16 and 17 July 2002 and by the first meeting of the ESCWA Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation, which was held in Beirut on 18 July 2002,⁹ with respect, in particular, to the following:

(a) The formulation of a new vision for the future of science, technology and technological innovation, and of national policies and strategies for implementation related thereto;

(b) The establishment of a new institutional framework in ESCWA member countries, with the focus on centres of excellence, technology parks, technology incubators and service and productive communities, all supported by high technology;

(c) The strengthening and coordination of research and development endeavours and increasing of the amounts allocated thereto in ESCWA member countries;

(d) The development of the national education and vocational training systems, with a view to eradicating traditional and technological illiteracy;

2. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare a study on the position of the countries of the region with respect to vital technology in the field of agriculture, food and medicines production; formulate priorities for the region with respect to those fields; and put forward proposals for executive initiatives to assist the countries of the region in confronting the demands arising from international trends that affect the future of the sector;

3. *Further requests* the secretariat to follow up implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations by means of a regional initiative that aims to achieve specific goals and tangible results, within an appropriate time-frame;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the matter to the Commission at its twenty-third session.

6th plenary meeting
17 April 2003

⁹ *Report of the Forum on Technology, Employment and Poverty Alleviation in the Arab Countries (E/ESCWA/TECH/2002/2)* and *Report of the First Meeting of the Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation (E/ESCWA/TECH/2002/1)*.