

276 (XXIV). Strengthening statistical capacities in the ESCWA region

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Cognizant of the need for continued cooperation between regional and international organizations in strengthening the capacities of national statistical offices to formulate evidence-based policies by producing and disseminating timely, accurate and comparable statistics and indicators,

Pursuant to the recommendations of the ESCWA Statistical Committee at its sixth session¹ and the outcome of the thirty-seventh session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in 2006,²

Referring to its resolution 262 (XXIII) of 12 May 2005 on support for the capacities of member countries in the field of statistics and the International Comparison Programme,

Recognizing the importance of maintaining a sound system of official statistics based on the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, which was adopted by the Statistical Commission at its Special Session of 11-15 April 1994,³

Noting that the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the region is a national responsibility both with respect to identifying national development goals and targets and to adopting the development policies necessary to ensure that those goals and targets are achieved by 2015,

Guided by General Assembly resolution 59/146 of 20 December 2004 on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, which aims to provide multilateral solutions to development challenges,

Referring to Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/12 of 22 July 2005 on the need to harmonize and improve United Nations informatics systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States,

Referring also to Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/50 of 28 July 2005 on the Damascus Declaration and the role of ESCWA in the achievement of the internationally-agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration,

1. *Calls upon* member countries to improve their national institutional statistical frameworks, including national statistical development strategies, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics of the United Nations Statistical Commission;

2. *Urges* member countries to intensify their efforts to strengthen their statistical capacities for producing and disseminating reliable and timely indicators of progress in achieving national and international development goals, including MDGs;

3. *Requests* the secretariat to continue its efforts to support member countries in developing national capacities through expert group meetings, training workshops and advisory services to improve the coverage, quality and comparability of qualitative statistics and data, particularly in such emerging fields as the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses and MDG-related issues;

4. *Calls upon* the secretariat to implement the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2008-2009⁴ with respect to the statistics subprogramme;

¹ E/ESCWA/SCU/2004/IG.1/6.

² E/2006/24-E/CN.3/2006/32.

³ E/1994/29-E/CN.3/1994/18.

5. *Requests* the secretariat to meet the increasing demand for statistics and statistical indicators at the regional and international levels by mobilizing additional resources to support the efforts of member countries in developing their national capacities through workshops, advocacy campaigns and training;

6. *Also requests* the secretariat, in close collaboration with member countries, to continue developing and maintaining repositories of data and development indicators, including MDGs, and to make them available for public access and evidence-based policymaking;

7. *Urges* donor Governments and agencies, regional and international financial institutions and the private sector to support ESCWA in its efforts to assist member countries in building their national statistical capacities;

8. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the progress made in this regard to the Commission at its twenty-fifth session.

7th plenary meeting
11 May 2006

⁴ E/ESCWA/24/6(Part III).