

305 (XXVII). Sustainable development in the region and follow-up and implementation of the decisions of the Rio+20 Conference

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Referring to General Assembly resolutions 66/220 concerning agricultural development and food security, 66/201 concerning implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification Particularly in Africa, 66/199 concerning the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and 66/197 concerning the Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development dated 22 December 2011; resolutions 65/154 on the International Year of Water Cooperation, 2013, and 65/151 on the International Year for Sustainable Energy for All dated 20 December 2010; and other relevant resolutions,

Referring also to Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/50 concerning the Damascus Declaration and the role of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in achieving the internationally-agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration,

Recalling ESCWA resolutions 281 (XXV) of 29 May 2008 concerning addressing climate change issues in the Arab region and 269 (XXIV) of 11 May 2006 concerning the role of ESCWA in the light of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document and the subsequent change process;

Noting the global and regional challenges, including the financial crisis and food crisis, the impact of climate change, the problems in the supply of energy and water, and the current circumstances in the region and their implications,

Welcoming the ministerial statements and declarations issued by countries of the region over the past decade concerning the achievement of sustainable development, in particular the decisions of the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit which was held in Kuwait on 19 and 20 January 2009 and the Arab Ministerial Water Council concerning the adoption of a mechanism to follow up progress in the achievement of water and sanitation targets, and those issued by the Arab Ministerial Council for Electricity and the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment,

Noting efforts made by Arab countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and the progress achieved,

Referring to the Arab Declaration issued by the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment on 19 April 2012 which was based on the outcome of the Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development which was held in Cairo, on 16 and 17 October 2011, in cooperation with the League of Arab States and the United Nations Environment Programme/Regional Office for West Asia, and ESCWA, in particular the provisions stipulating that the concept of green economy shall not be used as a pretext to create trade barriers and environmental standards, as a precondition for providing financial support and aid to recipient countries, or as a means to restrict the right of developing countries to utilize their natural resources according to their own development priorities,

Expressing its appreciation for the efforts of the ESCWA secretariat in analysing, monitoring and following up sustainable development issues, carrying out a significant role in the preparations for the Rio+20 Conference, and involving stakeholders and different sectors in identifying the priorities and challenges in the Arab region,

Commending the efforts of member countries to reach a common position in preparation for the Rio+20 Conference,

1. *Calls upon* member countries to adopt the Arab Declaration issued by the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment on 19 April 2012 as a reference for the negotiations concerning the outcome document of the Rio+20 Conference;

2. *Also calls upon* member countries to take an active part in the upcoming preparatory meetings to be held in New York from 29 May to 2 June 2012, which will be an important stage in the development of the negotiations, and to participate actively in the Rio+20 Conference;

3. *Urges* member countries to review policies, strategies and national frameworks with a view to making them more responsive to the requirements of sustainable development, to promote implementation of ministerial statements and declarations issued in that regard, and to review institutional frameworks with a view to integrating the three economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development;

4. *Requests* the secretariat to prepare a report on the outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference that includes proposals regarding matters of concern to the region, and to assist member countries in building their capacity to address those outcomes;

5. *Also requests* the secretariat to continue to coordinate and cooperate with Arab Governments, United Nations organizations, and the League of Arab States and its specialized committees to take measures to achieve sustainable development, and in particular to provide support to the energy, water and environmental sectors on climate change issues and to promote regional institutional frameworks for sustainable development;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its twenty-eighth session on measures taken to implement this resolution.

7th plenary meeting
10 May 2012