



**Fifth meeting of the ESCWA Consultative Committee on
Scientific & Technological Development and Technological Innovation**
Beirut, Lebanon, 29 and 30 March 2010

Information Note

A. Background

1. The Consultative Committee on Scientific and Technological Development and Technological Innovation (ESTIC) was established in 2001, pursuant to Resolution 225 adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) during its 21st ministerial session (10-11 May 2001), and then ratified by the United Nations Economic and Social Council in its substantive session of 2001. According to Resolution 225, the Committee should be formed of distinguished experts in science, technology and innovation, and should meet at least once every two years with the following main duties: (a) Advising on member country endeavours to acquire modern technology including the need for support, with particular reference to information and communications technology (ICT), biotechnology and new materials technology; (b) Proposing ways to promote regional cooperation for the transfer, adaptation and mastery of technology; (c) Advising on priorities related to ESCWA work programmes in the fields of developing scientific and technological capabilities and technological innovation; and (d) Following-up on international and regional resolutions relating to science, technology and innovation and their implementation in member countries.

2. The Information and Communications Technology Division (ICTD) of UN-ESCWA was mandated to provide substantive servicing to the Committee, according to the Secretary-General Bulletin dated 27 December 2002 (ST/SGB/2002/16) that established the organizational structure of ESCWA.

3. Since its establishment in 2001, four meetings of the Committee were held in 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008. The first meeting was held in Beirut, on 18 July 2002, in conjunction with the Forum on Technology, Employment and Poverty Alleviation in the Arab Countries (16-18 July 2002), and focused on the uses of new technologies, including ICT, for poverty reduction and employment creation. The second meeting was held in Damascus, on 24 November 2004, following the "Second Regional Preparatory Conference for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) – Partnership for building the Arab information society" (22-23 November 2004), and focused on building the information society in the Arab region. The third meeting was held in Beirut, during 6-7 March 2006, and addressed the subject of the ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC) for Development, subject of the Resolution 254 of the ESCWA 23rd ministerial session (9-12 May 2005), and submitted a follow-up report on its establishment to the 24th ministerial session (8-11 May 2006). The 24th session adopted Resolution 274 that approved the establishment of the ETC.

4. The fourth meeting was held in Manama, Bahrain on 1st and 2nd of April 2008, and assessed the ICTD achievements and programmes for 2008-2009. The meeting elaborated on the topic of the ESCWA Technology Centre (ETC), subject of Resolution 274 of the 24th session that approved the establishment of the ETC. Moreover, a resolution was prepared for the ESCWA 25th ministerial session that was held in May 2008 requesting the ESCWA Executive Secretary to finalize hosting agreement for the ETC.

B. Objectives

5. The forthcoming fifth ESTIC meeting will review ICTD's achievements during the biennium 2008-2009, its programme of work for 2010-2011, and its strategic framework for the biennium 2012-2013. The latter will be submitted to the ESCWA Ministerial Session followed by the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for adoption.

6. The meeting will also follow-up on Resolution 284, adopted by the 25th ministerial session in 2008, regarding the hosting selection process and final agreement for the ESCWA Technology Centre. ESTIC members will review the proposed Statute of the ETC as part of a draft resolution addressing the actual launching of the ETC in Amman, Jordan, to be submitted to the ESCWA 26th ministerial session in May 2010.

7. In an effort to address global technology trends, a special session will be dedicated to the technological issues pertaining to climate change, which is considered a priority area within ESCWA strategic framework. The session will address the impact of ICT and other technologies on climate change.

C. Topics

8. The issues to be addressed at the Fifth ESTIC meeting include:
- (a) Progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the previous ESTIC meeting;
 - (b) Progress made towards the establishment of the ETC for Development, including hosting selection process and final hosting agreement with the Government of Jordan, as well as the preparatory activities leading to the opening of the ETC by the third quarter of 2010;
 - (c) ICTD activities in promoting and supporting the establishment of Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI) Observatories in the region;
 - (d) Follow-up to and implementation of the WSIS outcomes in Western Asia;
 - (e) Developmental impact of technologies including ICT on climate change;
 - (f) ICTD activities implemented during 2008-2009, and work programme for the biennium 2010-2011; and
 - (g) Proposed strategic framework for 2012-2013.

D. Outcomes

9. The outcomes of the Fifth ESTIC meeting will be submitted to the ESCWA 26th ministerial session that will take place in Beirut, Lebanon, during 17-20 May 2010, for approval.

These outcomes will consist of:

- (i) Recommendations regarding the ETC, particularly proposed Statute and Hosting Agreement with the Government of Jordan, in light of the United Nations legal review;
- (ii) Draft resolutions related to the ETC and the follow-up to the WSIS outcomes;
- (iii) Recommendations for essential changes to the 2010-2011 work programme; and
- (iv) Refinement of the proposed strategic framework for 2012-2013.

E. Organization

10. The Fifth meeting of ESTIC is organized by the Information and Communications Technology Division (ICTD) of ESCWA, and will be held on the 29th and 30th of March 2010, at ESCWA Headquarters, in Beirut, Lebanon.

F. Participants and registration

11. Participants in the meeting include a selected group of distinguished experts in science, technology and innovation, including ICT, from academic institutions, research centres, governmental institutions, ministries and enterprises engaged in innovative activities, as well as representatives of international and regional development agencies.

G. Languages

12. English and Arabic are the working languages of the meeting, noting that simultaneous interpretation will not be provided.

H. Additional information and correspondence

13. The Web page <http://www.escwa.un.org/divisions/ictd/estic/> presents the latest information on the meeting and pre-registration. Correspondences, submissions, inquiries and requests for additional information are to be addressed to:

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