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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Committee on Technology for Development
First session
Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 11-12 February 2017

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Provisional agenda and annotations

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Annotations

1.   Opening of the session

The first session of the Committee on Technology for Development will begin at 9 a.m. on Saturday, 11 February 2017 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The representative of the United Arab Emirates will give the opening statement, followed by a welcome statement by the representative of the ESCWA secretariat.

2.   Election of officers

Rule 18 of the Rules of Procedure of Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia states: "Member States shall chair the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations.[*] Unless the Commission decides otherwise, those bodies shall elect all their other officers." Pursuant to that rule, the representative of the country on which the rotation falls shall chair the first session of the Committee on Technology for Development. The Committee shall then elect, from its members, two vice-chairs and a rapporteur.

3.   Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 8 of the Rules of Procedure of Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which apply to subsidiary bodies, states: "At the beginning of each session, once the Chair has assumed his/her duties in accordance with rule 12, the Committee shall adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda." Pursuant to that rule, the provisional agenda shall be submitted to the Committee on Technology for Development in document E/ESCWA/TDD/2016/IG.1/L.1 and the proposed organization of work shall be submitted in document E/ESCWA/TDD/2016/IG.1/L.2. Both documents may be adopted by the Committee as submitted or following amendments.

4.   Review of ESCWA work in the field of technology for development
        (E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/3)

The ESCWA secretariat will present the following documents under this item:

(a)   Implementation of the programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015
        (E/ESCWATDD/2017/IG.1/3(Part I))

This document sets out activities on technology for development implemented by ESCWA under subrogramme 4 on technology for development and regional integration of the ESCWA programme of work for the biennium 2014-2015. Activities included preparing and publishing studies and booklets; organizing expert group meetings, forums and workshops; and implementing projects funded by the United Nations Development Account.

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[*] ESCWA member States, in the Arabic alphabetical order, are: Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sudan, Iraq, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Mauritania and Yemen.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of those activities and make recommendations thereon.

(b) Technical cooperation services over the biennium 2014-2015
     (E/ESCWATDD/2017/IG.1/3(Part II))

This document sets out the technical cooperation activities undertaken by ESCWA in the field of information and communications technology over the biennium 2014-2015. Technical cooperation includes advisory services, capacity-building activities and field projects provided to member States upon request. The document also presents proposals on broadening the scope of technical cooperation activities undertaken by ESCWA under subprogramme 4, following its redesignation from "information and communications technology for regional integration" to "technology for development and regional integration".

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of those activities and make recommendations thereon.

(c) Activities undertaken by the ESCWA Technology Centre over the period 2011-2016
     (E/ESCWATDD/2017/IG.1/3(Part III))

The document submitted under this sub-item comprehensively presents the activities implemented by the ESCWA Technology Centre (headquartered in Jordan) since its establishment in 2011. Activities undertaken by the Centre include providing advisory services to member States, preparing studies, organizing expert group meetings, and offering support to member States on technology for development policymaking. The document summarizes the outcomes of the external evaluation of the Centre's work, conducted in 2015, and sets out the items of the Centre's 2017 action plan and highlights their links to the Sustainable Development Goals under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the activities implemented by the ESCWA Technology Centre and of the proposed activities for 2017, and make recommendations thereon.

5. Information and communications technology for development issues
    (E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/4)

The secretariat will present the following documents under this item:

(a) International and regional processes
     (E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/4(Part I)

This document sets out the international and regional processes developed under the auspices of the United Nations to promote the role of information and communications technology in development. It also explains the role of ESCWA in supporting the formulation of policies in this field. The document highlights those processes and urges member States to participate therein through their specialized institutions, given the importance of participation in harmonizing and coordinating national efforts with global developments and in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The document stresses that building an information society is a core objective of Arab countries in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, through information and modern technologies that contribute to the growth of the digital and Internet economy.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the document and provide comments thereon.

(b)   Digital economy and the shift towards smart societies in the Arab region
E/ESCWATDD/2017/IG.1/4(Part II)

This document considers the digital economy and its role in the shift towards smart societies. It sets out the features of the digital economy in developed countries and their plans in that regard, and reviews the status of the information and communications technology sector in the Arab region and its capacity to shift towards a digital economy and smart societies. The document aims to assist policymakers and decision-makers in member States in preparing development plans on information and communications technology to promote development and a shift towards a digital economy and smart societies, so as to achieve inclusive growth.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the document and provide comments and suggestions thereon.

6.   Science, technology and innovation for development issues
(E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/5)

The secretariat will present the following documents under this item:

(a)   International and regional processes
(E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/5(Part I))

This document reviews the current international and regional processes aimed at harnessing information, technology and innovation for development, especially the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the tasks assigned to these processes pursuant to international resolutions, their working mechanisms and the key themes that they tackle. The document also considers some regional and international institutions working in the Arab region in the field of science, technology and innovation for development, namely the League of Arab States and its institutions, the Federation of Arab Scientific Research Councils and ESCWA. The document concludes with proposals on promoting science, technology and innovation for inclusive sustainable development in the region.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the document a provide comments thereon.

(b)   Innovation landscape in the Arab region
(E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/5(Part II))

This document outlines innovation in several Arab countries, namely Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates, based on the following internationally-recognized elements of innovation: education and training; research and development; policies, legislation and regulations; infrastructure and information and communications technology; and the innovation ecosystem. The document highlights the status of innovation in the Arab region in accordance with the Global Innovation Index, which is the most widely used and comprehensive innovation index worldwide.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the document and provide comments thereon.

(c) ESCWA project to promote technology transfer in Arab countries
(E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/5(Part III))

This document presents the ESCWA project aimed at promoting technology transfer in Arab countries. To date, seven countries have agreed to apply the project, namely Egypt, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, the Sudan and Tunisia. The project seeks to strengthen member States' capacity to provide an enabling political environment for research, development and innovation, and to market the outcomes of scientific research through centres tasked with transferring and nationalizing technology at the level of scientific research institutions and universities. The project also aims to support countries in formulating national policies on research, development and innovation; in developing their technology systems; and in building bridges between scientific research institutions and manufacturing, production and trade activities, mainly concentrated in the private sector. The document sets out a proposed regional plan for implementing the project in most Arab countries, so as to achieve productive integration.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the document and make comments and suggestions thereon.

7. Programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017 in the field of technology for development
(E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/6)

This document sets out the programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017 in the field of technology for development, which has been semi-implemented to date. ESCWA work in this field comes under subrogramme 4 on technology for development and regional integration of the ESCWA strategic framework for the biennium 2016-2017. The programme of work sets out the objective of subprogramme 4, its strategy, expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement, and the proposed outcomes for achieving these accomplishments. It also presents the external factors that must be met in order to implement these outcomes as required.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017 in the field of technology for development.

8. Proposed programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 in the field of technology for development
(E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/7)

This document sets out the proposed programme of work for the biennium 2018-2019 in the field of technology for development. ESCWA work in this field comes under subprogramme 4 on technology for development and regional integration. The programme of work sets out the objective of subprogramme 4, its strategy, expected accomplishments, indicators of achievement, and the proposed outcomes for achieving these accomplishments. It also presents the external factors that must be met in order to implement these outcomes as required.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the document and make comments and suggestions thereon.

9. Technology and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Arab region (roundtable discussion)
(E/ESCWA/TDD/2017/IG.1/8)

The secretariat will hold a roundtable discussion on the role of science, technology and innovation in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and incorporating the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development in national development plans in the Arab region. The document submitted under this item sets out science, technology and innovation mechanisms for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. It also reviews key global initiatives on technology aimed at achieving these Goals, and presents

proposals on interacting with those initiatives to achieve national development goals under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Representatives of member States are invited to take note of the document and participate in the discussion.

10. Date and venue of the second session of the Committee on Technology for Development

Representatives of member States shall agree on the date and venue of the second session of the Committee on Technology for Development.

11. Other matters

This item covers any other issues that Committee members may wish to raise and discuss.

12. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Committee on Technology for Development at its first session

The Committee shall consider the draft recommendations of its first session for discussion and adoption.