25 – 29 MARCH 2018

Documentation of the Work of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

Committee Staff

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<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Jakob Landwehr</td>
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<td>Chair</td>
<td>Jonathan Stupple</td>
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Agenda

I. Achieving the Arab Development Outlook
II. Reducing the Occurrence of Gender-Based Violence
III. Strengthening Arab Least Developed Countries

Resolutions adopted by the Committee

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<td>ESCWA/1/1</td>
<td>Achieving the Arab Development Outlook</td>
<td>13 votes in favor, 1 vote against, 0 abstentions</td>
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<td>ESCWA/1/2</td>
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Summary Report

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia held its annual session to consider the following agenda items:

I. Achieving the Arab Development Outlook
II. Strengthening Arab Least Developed Countries
III. Reducing the Occurrence of Gender-Based Violence

The session was attended by representatives of 15 Member States.

On Sunday, the committee adopted the agenda of I, III, II, beginning discussion on the topic of “Achieving the Arab Development Outlook.” By Tuesday, the Dais received a total of four proposals covering a wide range of subtopics including strengthening regional microfinance initiatives, developing infrastructure for education and finance, promoting post-conflict development, and suggesting best practices for sustainable and renewable energy policies, all in the framework of the five pillars of the Arab Development Outlook: Vision 2030. From the outset of the meeting, delegates worked on developing appropriate regional solutions with a remarkable degree of cooperation and diligence.

On Wednesday, four draft resolutions had been approved by the Dais, two of which had amendments. The committee adopted four resolutions following voting procedure, one of which received unanimous support by the body. The resolutions represented a wide range of issues, including the need to strengthen regional data-sharing and microfinance, the utility of waste-energy conversion solutions, linkages between lack of education and terrorism, and the urgency of realizing transformational growth in the region. The committee is especially recognized for maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and productive engagement throughout its work and deliberations.
The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Guided by Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations (1945), which highlights the importance to maintain peace and international security as well as the respect for human rights whilst upholding state sovereignty,

Believing in the rights of the individual, as outlined by the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948,

Affirming the role of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Statistical Committee, established under ESCWA resolution 179/(XVI) (1992), to gather information on micro-financing strategies,

Desiring to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” adopted in General Assembly resolution 70/1 in 2015, based on principles adopted in General Assembly resolution 66/288 (2012) on “The future we want,”

Reaffirming the importance of the Arab Development Outlook: Vision 2030 (Vision 2030) launched in 2015 as well as the common goals of the Arab States to achieve political, social, and economic stability that are innately shared, particularly by Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Western Asia,

Re-emphasizing pillars 4, 5 and 6 of Vision 2030, focusing on Transformational Growth, Human Development and Social Justice, and Regional Integration, with particular emphasis on the effects on LDCs,

Recalling further the work of the ESCWA Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development stressing the importance of ESCWA building capacity and strengthening its working processes,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 69/166 of 2014 on “The right to privacy in the digital age” to ensure the right to privacy as it pertains to the modern world, and understanding the developing challenges faced in the age of technology,

Taking note of the necessity to share data among Member States as highlighted in the ESCWA Annual Report 2016 (E/ESCWA/OES/2017/1),

Taking into consideration the information gathered by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2017, in which Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) Member States’ average growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) decreased from 5.6 percent to 1.7 percent within one year,

Recognizing the role of regional conferences, such as the Middle Eastern and North Africa Summit in 2018, in discussing concerns and essential needs related to issues of economic diversification and regional direct investment between Member States,

Emphasizing the importance of regional governmental programs such as the Arab Gulf Program for Development (AGFUND) for their role in supporting local development initiatives such as business and strategic planning, and financial modeling,

Having considered the importance of regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the Afif Charity originating in Qatar, in contributing to significant job growth in the region,
Confident that micro-finance institutions economically supported by regional governmental programs such as AGFUND will be guided by consumer protection and responsibility codes covering disclosure, transparency, service standards, and ethical practices.

Deeply appreciative of the United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries in 2011, which was an important conference to help develop sustainable economic strategies, such as the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020,

Having considered further the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in 2015 and outcomes adopted in General Assembly resolution 69/313 (2015) on “Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,” and its emphasis on the need to address economic inequality between Member States and calling to provide additional platforms to address the challenges of valuable countries,

1. Suggests all relevant ESCWA subsidiary committees, such as the Statistical Committee, the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development and Committee on Technology for Development, to collaborate more closely with regard to the sharing of statistical data relevant to achieving the targets set in Vision 2030 by Member States and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), such as:
   a. Collecting data for the purposes of human development and channeling of funds with special emphasis on areas that need micro-financing and are deeply dependent on Official Development Aid (ODA);
   b. Increasing efforts of data gathering in LDCs and conflict affected areas that severely lack data gathering mechanisms and bureaus;
   c. Gathering data on the progress of regional development institutions, such as the Arab Fund, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), to be more open for public scrutiny for the projects they finance through methods such as GeoMapping technology;

2. Reaffirms its belief in the importance of coordinating demographic data gathering and sharing between ESCWA Member States and the lack thereof for certain ESCWA Member States, and encourages the sharing of demographic data in accordance with the ESCWA Annual Report (E/ESCWA/OES/2016/1) of 2015 by:
   a. Calling upon the ESCWA Secretariat to employ the ESCWA Statistical Committee to partner with state-controlled data gathering bodies and UN recognized independent data gathering organizations, such as Amnesty International, to collect data for regions that have an inadequate or non-existent collection mechanisms;
   b. Acting in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 68/167 of 2014 on “The right to privacy in the digital age;”
   c. Encouraging the ESCWA Trust Fund for Regional Activities to increase its focus on financial support for data collection and analysis in all ESCWA Member States in order to continue to update strategies aiming to increase socio-economic growth within individual states in the Western Asian region;

3. Recommends the ESCWA Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development to supervise the establishment and operation of micro-financing schemes, if applicable, within the economic landscapes of Member States with the aim of reducing poverty by increasing job opportunities, the knowledge economy and innovation within each ESCWA Member State to achieve the Vision 2030 by:
   a. Mandating the Committee to provide advice for ESCWA Member States on the formation of microfinance institutions, as defined in Secretary-General (SG) statement and message 10151-ECO/94 (2005) addressing the problem that financial services are often not accessible for low-income households;
Further mandating the Committee to prepare a report to be presented to ESCWA in 2020 on the possible implementation of microfinance institutions for development with specific emphasis on:

i. Clear guidelines for registration and incorporation of microfinance institutions including annual auditing schemes and basic reporting requirements;

ii. Management criteria that encourage regional state investment in development programs;

4. Calls upon greater collaboration between ESCWA subsidiary bodies, in particular the Statistical Committee and the Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development, and the governing bodies of all ESCWA Member States on micro-financing, to acknowledge the aforementioned report outcomes with particular regard to vulnerable groups including but not limited to women and youth;

5. Directs attention to the economic and social benefits for ESCWA Member States to collaborate with regional governmental programs such as AGFUND to receive necessary financial resources to create micro-financing institutions and contribute to the achievement of Vision 2030 based on the consideration of previous successes in Jordan, Bahrain, Yemen, Syria, and Egypt;

6. Expresses its support of increased collaboration between Member States and private entities including, but not limited to, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) especially NGOs recognized by both Member States and the UN, UN bodies, and regional funds through:

a. Collaboration such as financial aid, campaign aid, with NGOs supported by ESCWA and within its Member States, to be:

   i. Promoted by ESCWA in the form of increasing regional ties between ESCWA Member States, in accordance with the goal of regional coordination outlined in Vision 2030;

   ii. Coordinated between techniques on the lines of the technical cooperation network page organized by ESCWA in Beirut for facilitating coordination;

b. Inviting UN bodies and funds like United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund for Middle Eastern and North African Countries (UNICEF MENA), for further input such as financial and campaign-related into the above development program as to its implementation within the Western Asian region;

c. Providing financial support to Arab LDCs, in accordance with appropriate international guidelines defined by monetary institutions such as the World Bank, Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), or the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to:

   i. Supplement state-endorsed programs for micro-financing such as the Bahrain Family Bank;

   ii. Support non-governmental initiatives for financial aid by tangible means including but not limited to creating job opportunities, such as the Afif charity, a non-governmental organization in Qatar;

   iii. Support also inter-state and intra-state collaboration between not only governments of states of ESCWA but also between governments at a secondary and tertiary levels;

7. Calls upon the ESCWA Secretariat and all its relevant sub-committees to carry out a survey on forms, implementation challenges to identify, recommendations to:

a. Demarcate the role of finance including but not limited to macro- and micro-economic financial problems and economic self-sustainability between Member States in the Western Asian region;

b. Form analysis along with recommendations, that is to:

   i. Be carried out in Member States for a duration of five years;
ii. Be funded by Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for Economic and Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries;

iii. Be carried out by the Ahmed Hussein Head Statistics Coordination Unit for Data Collection and Population Analysis of ESCWA;

c. Be prepared and presented in 2022 elaborating actively on the role of finance, both on macro and micro levels in the Western Asian region;

8. Encourages the formation of an international regional conference between Arab States which:

   a. Will be located in Beirut, Lebanon;

   b. Includes the participation of all ESCWA Member States and voluntary participants of the Arab League;

   c. Aims to increase attention to the development of Arab LDCs in order to better coordinate their international standing, whilst addressing concerns of sustainable economic development including best practices to address the goals of Social Justice in Vision 2030;

   d. Recommends coordination between ESCWA LDCs, listed in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Developments’ Least Developed Report (UNCTAD/LDC/2016);

   e. Shall be held in 2020, and reconvene after 5 years, in order to review the internal application of recommended policies;

   f. Will include a review report in 2030 published by ESCWA and submitted to ECOSOC, following the second conference, which shall consider:

      i. Areas where recommendations from the conference have been successfully implemented into policy;

      ii. Areas where further monitoring is required in order for the policies mentioned above to be eventually successfully implemented;

      iii. Recommendations for further action to be taken before the next meeting.
The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Guided by the purpose and principles of the Charter of the United Nations (UN) (1945), especially Article 1 which calls for international coordination and cooperation in addressing global issues such as development,

Affirming the mandate of Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), established by the United Nations Economic and Social Council resolution 1004/L (1964), to be a regional body for addressing economic and social development, regional cooperation and integration, and the exchange of experience and best practices,

Aware of the need to incentivize the adoption of renewable energy sources among public and private sectors, such as solar energy and geothermal energy, as stated in the Pan Arab Energy Strategy 2030 (2013),

Emphasising the concerns for transparency and accountability highlighted in United Nations General Assembly resolutions 68/264 (2014), 69/272 (2015), 70/255 (2016), and 71/283 (2017), and the effectiveness of distributed ledger technology in addressing these concerns as highlighted by the World Bank in the article entitled Blockchain and Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) (2018),

Further emphasising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDGs 7, 8, 9, 11, and 12, which encourage the development of diverse and sustainable infrastructures and economies globally in addition to ensuring the protection of citizens' social rights and the environment with particular regard to the focus on the safe removal and management of solid waste in SDG 11,

Recalling the need expressed by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (2015) through goal 17 for “Protecting our ecosystems for all” that prioritizes establishing and making available to all nations clean technologies and innovations that ensure the minimization of developmental effects on the environment,

Fulfilling the objectives of the Arab Development Outlook: Vision 2030 (Vision 2030) such as achieving transformational growth through green energies and promoting regional integration which seeks to support Western Asian member states’ implementation of the global goals identified in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by UNGA resolution 70/1 in 2015,

Takes note of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change’s Marrakech Action Proclamation for our Climate and Sustainable Development (2016), and its focus on combating climate change through increased regional cooperation and capacity building for sustainable technology,

Deeply disturbed that up to 12.7 million metric tons of pollute the oceans in 2017, resulting in over $8 billion of ecosystem damages as reported by the United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP),

Stressing the importance of the regional goals outlined by the five pillars of Vision 2030 and of taking concrete actions towards its implementation in Western Asia in line with the third pillar Transformational Growth and the fifth pillar Regional Integration which address environmentally sustainable developments and technology sharing respectively, thus contributing to regional divergence from non-renewable based economies,

Praising many Member States’ immense successes in developing comprehensive national Vision 2030 action plans and implementing many of the ambitious objectives of diversifying economies, pursuing renewable energies, and furthering sustainable development across the region,
Fully aware of the needs for local governments to reduce barriers to entry in the waste-to-energy industry, specifically referring to the barriers of energy plant construction and overhead costs in order to enable all ESCWA Member States to participate in the industry.

Acknowledging the successes of ESCWA’s Statistical Committee in supporting and encouraging Member States to develop more standardized, effective, and accurate statistical data as well as increasing their statistical capacity, particularly noting the advancement in developing accurate energy data,

Further acknowledging the work done by ESCWA’s Committee of Energy in connecting and engaging regional stakeholders, experts, and Member State representatives with energy concerns and developmental knowledge,

Alarmed by statistics published by UN bodies such as the UNEP, revealing the detrimental effects of unsustainable or undeveloped waste management systems, especially those that expose the frequency and volume of eutrophication, pollution, and the consequential dangers posed to human health and ecosystem-based economies,

Conscious of the financial constraints that face developing and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) that may hinder their ability to adopt major sustainable waste management and energy systems, recognizing that ESCWA Member States are listed as LDCs,

Inspired by the invention and prospect of sustainable waste management systems that convert waste into renewable energy while protecting nation’s ecosystems, especially those implemented in some ESCWA Member States, such as Jordan’s Waste-to-Energy plant project in the Greater Amman Municipality which aims to process waste at the rate 2,000 tons per day,

Recognizing the volunteer donations of different countries and of funding programs such as the Arab Fund for Economic and Social development, the Sustainable Development Goals Fund (SDG Fund), the Scaling Up Renewable Energy Program, and other initiatives that donate capital to fund areas such as but not limited to waste management and energy generation initiatives, and welcoming further investment into the program,

1. Establishes a subsidiary committee of the ESCWA named the Waste Trade Commission (WTC), in order to address the need for sustainable waste management systems, green energies and promote sustainability among ESCWA Members States, aiming to:

   a. Reduce negative impacts on the environment;
   b. Encourage increased employment within the sectors of waste management and energy generation;
   c. Allocate resources towards sustainable energy development;
   d. Increase cooperation between the Western Asia region resulting in the emergence of a waste trade market;

2. Decides that the WTC shall oversee and standardize the sale of waste units in cooperation with the ESCWA Committee on Energy by:

   a. Setting regional standards for the trade, guided by classifications used by the International Organization for Standardization, through:

      i. Defining the waste unit as one metric ton of waste;
      ii. Classifying Recyclable Waste (RW) as waste that can be recycled or reused, such as paper materials and plastic, specifically with plastic types 1 Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET), 2 High-Density Polyethylene (HDPE) and 4 Low-Density Polyethylene (LDPE); 
      iii. Characterizing Inorganic Waste (IW) as non-recyclable and non-compostable waste, including plastic types 3 Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC), 5 Polypropylene (PP), 7 (BPA, Polycarbonate and LEXAN) and 6 PS (Polystyrene) when recycling demand is met.
iv. Identifying Organic Waste (OW) as biodegradable waste that can be composted, such as food matter and sewage;

b. Allowing waste units to be traded in metric tons, or any subdivision of the unit;

c. Defining the price for waste units within each category by the market, taking into consideration the specific purposes of the different categories of waste units;

d. Consisting of up to two representatives from each ESCWA Member State;

e. Meeting bi-annually rotating among Member States, in Beirut, Lebanon;

f. Chairing these meetings in alphabetical order of all ESCWA Member States;

3. Calls upon the ESCWA Secretariat to work in partnership with the Statistical Committee of ESCWA to conduct individual reports on waste-to-energy conversion opportunities if requested by ESCWA Member States, specifically collecting data on trade volume potential, sustainable waste management capacities, potential barriers to entry and recommendations to overcome such barriers, as well as the overall growth potential and includes respective targets and outputs in the next ESCWA program of work for the biennium 2020-2021;

4. Decides that WTC shall prepare a report until 2023 on the feasibility for all waste storage and trade organizations selling waste units to acquire a Waste Trade & Storage Accreditation provided by local governments and guided by the WTC Best Practices of Trade and Storage, whereby this accreditation would encourage:

a. Organizations to operate on a first-in first-out system (FIFO) for storing and selling waste units;

b. Organizations to store RW for indefinite periods;

c. Organizations not store IW for more than one week following the FIFO system;

d. Organizations not store OW for more than one week in environments of no more than zero-degree Celsius conditions to avoid the release of methane and loss of potency of the organic matter for energy generation by means of anaerobic digestion;

e. All organizations that store waste to keep accurate records of inventory and report inventories to the local agencies as well as to the WTC;

f. All storage facilities containing combustible matter to contain appropriate ventilation or methane collection systems to avoid combustion;

g. Local governments to conduct annual audits at random to assess adherence to regulation of inventories, product quality, and building regulation adherence, seeking the consultation of the WTC in this process if needed;

h. Organizations to coordinate all waste trades with a local accreditation agency, as well as the WTC, communicating transportation schedules, types of waste being transported, and quantities (in mass) of waste being transported;

i. Vehicles to be equipped with ventilation systems with local law enforcement notified, if required by national or international safety standards, of the transportation schedule, if waste is combustible;

j. Drivers to receive specialized training for operating large vehicles and managing the risks of transporting combustible material;
k. Local governments to conduct audits to assess adherence to regulation of transportation coordination with relevant agencies and law enforcement, transportation vessel safety, and driver competence;

5. Establishes a Waste-to-Energy fund (WE Fund) based on the recommendations in the report mentioned below to act as a regional fund to subsidize sustainable waste-to-energy initiatives for all ESCWA Member States, to be a subsidiary fund of the WTC whereby the fund shall:

a. Be limited specifically to WTC initiatives;

b. Provide financial assistance for the construction of incineration plants, anaerobic digester plants, and recycling plants to process waste units in developing Arab states where funding will be allocated by the WTC based on an application process:
   i. Reviewed bi-annually by the WTC with application and report deadlines set as the first day of the month before these meetings;
   ii. That includes a project proposal outlining blueprints, construction costs and timeline, resource availability and utilization, and potential barriers to project implementation;
   iii. With preference towards project proposals that include renewable and sustainable energy structures, such as solar power and geothermal heating and cooling;

c. Provide this financial assistance for developing waste-to-energy and transportation infrastructure through an incremental payment system of every 6-months post WTC review and approval of mandatory bi-annual reports of the projects, which will:
   i. Be composed by the project leaders and submitted to the WTC upon completion;
   ii. Include description on the current progress of construction, including a flexible schedule report, flexible budget report, and current challenges and challenge mitigation report;
   iii. Be subject to evaluation as to whether or not the WE-Fund will continue funding specific projects;

d. Be open to charitable donations by ESCWA Member States,

e. Be headquartered in Beirut, Lebanon;

6. Directs the ESCWA Secretariat to compile a report that will evaluate the amount of financial resources necessary to efficiently and sustainability implement the WTC, whereby this report will:

a. Evaluate the funds needed for WTC administration and upkeep as well as funding for the WE Fund;

b. Discuss and evaluate funding opportunities from:
   i. Voluntary private donations, including from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia;
   ii. Public-private partnerships;
   iii. The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa;
   iv. The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development;
   v. The Arab Gulf Programme for Development;
   vi. The Arab Development Fund;
   vii. The SDG fund;
   viii. The Scaling Up Renewable Energy Program;

c. Be presented in two years in Beirut, Lebanon at conference meeting for the Committee on Energy and any interested ESCWA Member State prior to implementation of the WTC and Waste-To-Energy Fund;
7. Encourages the financial institutions, such as banks, contributing to the WE Fund to manage financial assets through using accountable, non-anonymous, DLT to verify accounts and spending as well as submit annual audits to ESCWA, acknowledging that:

   a. The purpose of DLTs is to allow for multiple decentralized verifications and to ensure accurate records and transparency in the funding process;

   b. Tunisia will lead the software architecture design and implementation for DLT, with a key focus on consistent reporting of information;

   c. Servers storing DLT information will be located in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia;

   d. Ledger transactions begin with the DLT in order to record the identity of the parties in transaction, and the physical capital transfer will be made by financial institutions following this record;

8. Recommends a local tax on the private sector trade of waste units to fund administrative costs for waste trading, sorting, and processing for organizations where:

   a. The tax and allocation shall be determined by individual Member States;

   b. The taxes shall not be imposed for plants for an extended period of time to encourage local entrepreneurship;

   c. Tax revenue is encouraged to be allocated towards investment in waste processing plants such as recycling plants, incineration plants, and anaerobic digester plants, emphasizing the need to subsidize plant construction and administrative expenses per the discretion of each individual Member State;

   d. Consultation with ESCWA and subsidiary ESCWA bodies in the formulation and implementation processes of the local tax is highly encouraged;

9. Invites Member States to implement energy sharing programs, with oversight from and reports by ESCWA’s Committee on Energy, to allow LDCs access to the necessary resources needed to establish or rebuild renewable energy institutions within its government;

10. Endorses increased Member State contributions to sustainable energy funds, such as the Clean Technology Fund, the Strategic Climate Fund, as well as the Scaling Up Renewable Energy Program, to finance further development of renewable energy sectors not only in Member States with established renewable energy industries, but also in LDCs and developing countries who need the necessary technology to improve such sectors.
The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recognizing the importance of domestic jurisdiction, as per the Article 2, Paragraph 7, of the Charter of the United Nations (UN) (1945), and its importance for independent development without interference from ulterior agendas,

Considering Article 62, Paragraph 1, of the Charter of the United Nations (1945) which grants the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) the ability to make or initiate studies and reports with respect to international economic, social, cultural, educational, health, and related matters,

Approving the work of ESCWA in the area of promoting education and political participation among youth and its impacts on promoting development reported on in the Promoting Participatory Democracy in the ESCWA Region Technical Paper, in line with target 16.7 of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory, and representative decision-making at all levels,

Bearing in mind chapter 1-D of the Arab Development Outlook: Vision 2030 (Vision 2030) of 2015 which illuminates the lack of quality education and opportunity as a major obstacle to accomplishing the development in the Western Asian region,

Reaffirming the commitment of ESCWA to the enjoyment of peace, stability, and prosperity through the goals set forth in the Vision 2030 of 2015,

Also bearing in mind the success of partnerships in education between Member States and UN entities such as the partnership between the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the Tunisian Ministry of Education campaign from 2016 designed to provide second chance opportunities to students who have dropped out of school and are susceptible to extreme radicalization,

Aware of the benefit of keeping children in school to focus on their education, as emphasized in the 2015 report of the Secretary-General on the Plan of Action to Prevent Violent Extremism (A/70/674), in partnership with the United Nations Economic, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as a means of increasing retention rates in order to mitigate radicalization,

Cognizant of the use of social media as a method of extremism and terrorism recruitment portrayed in UNESCO’s report Youth and Violent Extremism on Social Media: Mapping the Research (2017),

Stressing once again the importance of transparency, accountability, and credibility in decision-making processes in order to foster public confidence as highlighted by the 2017 Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) Expert Group Meeting on Open Government: Emerging Technologies for Greater Government Transparency and Accountability in the Arab Region,

Acknowledging the difficulties faced when attempting to effectively understand and combat terror in the region, especially the lack of focus and specificity on Western Asia by the Security Council’s Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC),

Realizing the severe situation in Western Asia regarding peace and security, especially in relation to terrorism, and the detrimental effects it has on Member States in the region, such as political, economic, and social instability,

1. Fully supports the use of education-based programs to prevent the radicalization of youth within all Member States and encourage ESCWA to increase the focus to address this issue in future programs of work through:
a. Strengthening collaboration between Member States in and out of conflict to share educational resources and knowledge to fill each Member State’s educational gaps such as improvement of educational facilities and scarcity of teachers in conflict zones and maintain educational services through periods of conflict;

b. Encouraging Member States to prioritize retention of students in educational institutions;

2. **Expresses its appreciation** for the inclusion of economically and socially vulnerable groups, such as but not limited to women, children, people with disabilities, refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and people in rural areas in all recommendations for the promotion of enhanced livelihoods adopted by ESCWA;

3. **Suggests** the voluntary national implementation of apprenticeships within ESCWA Member States in order to provide opportunities for youth in different sectors to be determined by the Member State, such as Agriculture, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (ASTEM) and other areas by:

   a. Encouraging LDCs and More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) in Western Asia to participate in exchanges to encourage youth to learn skills in respective critical sectors;

   b. Increasing partnerships with local and regional non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governmental organizations to find specific areas of need for youth development within Member States;

   c. Providing a platform through ESCWA for cooperation between Member States to better facilitate these apprenticeships;

4. **Calls upon** the Secretariat of ESCWA to conduct a follow-up report by 2025, evaluating the progress of Member States and making recommendations to implement the suggestions presented in the 2017 Expert Group Meeting on Open Government: Emerging Technologies for Greater Government Transparency and Accountability in the Arab Region;

5. **Encourages** ECOSOC to advocate for an expansion of the UN Security Council’s Tech Against Terrorism Program focusing on radical ideologies promoted on social media;

6. **Decides** that the ESCWA Secretariat shall prepare a feasibility report to be presented in 2020 on the creation of a subsidiary committee and database focused on combating and understanding terrorism specifically in Western Asia, including:

   a. Research on the most important data and reports on terror to be gathered in the region;

   b. Suggesting options for potential membership in this committee, including but not limited to Member States, Observer States, NGOs and Civil Society;

   c. Recognizing potential funding provisions for initial implementation and continued support of the subsidiary committee and database;

   d. Determining potential goals and outputs for the database and subsidiary committee;

   e. Exploring potential mechanisms for proliferation of information on the database and subsidiary committee;

7. **Recommends** that the World Bank, Arab Development Fund, other relevant regional development banks expand their interests to conflict-prone Member States within the Western Asian region for consideration of future projects, to assist in the rebuilding of post-conflict areas through developing settlements for low income families using sustainable methods such as:
8. **Invites** the ESCWA Secretariat to prepare a report which gauges the availability and success of educational opportunities such as internships, mentorships, scholarships, fellowships, and other programs aiming to promote youth inclusion in government to expand civil involvement by:

   a. Evaluating the success of existing programs, such as the United Nations Development Group Arab States Middle East and North Africa Region: Strategic Action Plan on Young People, and elucidating how other programs may be improved to increase youth involvement;

   b. Recommending a quinquennial report to track the improvements of programs beginning in the year 2020.

   a. Creating cost-efficient, sustainable housing using organic materials and modeling housing by mirroring the United Nations Human Settlements Programme’s Sustainable Housing for Sustainable Cities Framework;

   b. Promoting water security through collecting and filtering rainwater;

   c. Producing clean, renewable energy through solar panel rooftops;
The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Bearing in mind Article 55 of the Charter of the United Nations (1945) promoting economic and social cooperation in order to improve the stability and well-being,

Keeping in mind Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) highlighting that everyone has the right to education,

Emphasizing the regional AGA Khan Fund for Economic Development (AKFED) (1967), in particular, highlighting its active role as a development institution oriented towards social change,

Recalling the achievements of existing regional financial institutions such as the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (1972), the Islamic Development Bank (1973) and The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa established (1973) as regional financial institutions making significant contributions for the future development of the region,

Highlighting the ESCWA Committee on Energy, established under resolution 204 (XVIII), of 25 May 1995, and its function as a forum for coordinating energy issues and regional trade,

Considering the role of the Committee on Transport and Logistics, established under resolution 213 (XIX), of 7 May 1997, and its mission to progress regional avenues of trade, both in tangible and intangible capital,

Expressing its appreciation to the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development in the Countries of the ESCWA Region, established under resolution 214 (XIX), of 7 May 1997, and its tireless efforts to unlock the potential of ESCWA’s entrepreneurs, visionaries, youth, and shift economic activities from the informal to the formal sector,

Recalling the contributions of the ESCWA Committee on Technology for Development, established under the resolution 315 (XXVIII), of 18 September 2014 towards identifying opportunities for economic growth and improving tacit capital,

Recalling Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 8, 9, and 11 and their focus on decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation and infrastructure and sustainable cities and communities,

Fulfilling the objectives of Vision 2030 such as achieving transformational growth through green energies and promoting regional integration which seeks to support Western Asian Member States’ implementation of the global goals identified in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution 70/1 in 2015,

Stressing the importance of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (TICFD) (2015),

Recognizing resolution 71/251 adopted by the General Assembly (2016) on “Establishment of the Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries” as a good example of a mechanism helping sharing scientific and technological solutions against the obstacles of the SDGs,

Affirming the importance of the Arab Development Outlook: Vision 2030 (Vision 2030) (2016) and its focus on economic, human and socioeconomic development by promoting the regional integration and trade pillar of its five pillars,
Acknowledging the achievements of existing business forum held by public and private sectors such as Arab Foundations Forum and Arab Financial Forum by Middle East Consultants in terms of inviting more foreign companies to invest in the region,

Bearing in mind the national successes such as of the Republic of Iraq has had in utilizing Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and regional cooperation to increase productivity, and deliver improved infrastructure and public utilities which bolster trade, such as the $7.4 billion Grand Faw Port project or Iraq’s purchasing-sharing-agreements (PSAs) with international oil corporations,

Believing that the highly educated and high achieving foreign diasporas of ESCWA, who make a significant economic impact in their host countries, can play a key role in developing value-added industries and rebuilding efforts by utilizing their expertise, and that their economic impact is substantial and necessary to promote regional development,

Noting with satisfaction the success of international funding conferences such as the International Conference for the Reconstruction of the Republic of Iraq, hosted in Kuwait in February 2018, that raised the substantial sum of 30 billion USD for reconstruction purposes and was an exemplary conference in overcoming historical grievances to build toward a better and more prosperous future,

Desiring all Member States forego historical grievances or political affiliation to see positive developments, and increase bilateral and multilateral cooperation in order to accomplish our key objective of realizing a future that provides decent employment in secure states,

Recognizing the successes in bi- and multilateral trade originating from bi- and multilateral agreements, as evidenced in the recently created Basra-Aqaba pipeline (2018) between the Republic of Iraq, the Kingdom of Jordan and the Arab Republic of Egypt to deliver oil and gas,

Considering the significance of Cash Transfer Programs which aim to increase investments in education and positively impact school attendance and educational attainment,

Noting further the adoption of Geo-Mapping technology to visualize specific geographic locations and evaluate whether aid and development programs are delivered to regions that are in dire need of such aid and programs,

1. Recommends Member States to implement strategies that incentivize and encourage the youth to pursue higher education beyond that of primary schooling, in order to promote the human development agenda outlined in Vision 2030, by:

   a. Promoting the importance of secondary and university-level education prior to engaging in the workforce via;

      i. Scholarships;

      ii. State-led advocacy campaigns;

   b. Creating internship-based programs funded by governmental organizations that allow the youth to engage in the workforce for short periods of time and thus, advance their motivation and provide them with practical and useful knowledge in a professional environment;

   c. Conducting annual reviews of Member States’ schools, with a specific focus on the levels of attendance, to determine where further aid as well as incentives, such as Cash Transfer Programs, are needed;

2. Further encourages Member States to cooperate with the objective of reducing institutional barriers to employment, and accomplish this by requesting an in-depth report from the Technical Committee on Liberalization of Foreign Trade, Economic Globalization and Financing for Development to analyze and identify best practices and methods by;
a. Encouraging a relaxation of labor laws to aid our unemployed in finding work;

b. Encourage relaxing laws for businesses to register, with the objective of promoting a shift from the informal to the formal sector, thereby causing a direct boost in recognized economic activity;

c. Encourage the adoption of mutually supportive regional trade, finance and legal frameworks in order to improve Ease of Doing Business in the region by encouraging Member States by easing labor, business and travel laws for local and regional initiatives;

d. Creating a platform between Member State to share the technology to transform them into industry of high added value activities and best practices based on their own experiences;

e. Attracting investment from private enterprises to invest into Member States more;

f. Promoting existing private business forums for the purpose of attracting foreign companies to invest more into the regions;

g. Encourages Member States to adhere to existing global administrative law international related to copyrights and property rights;

3. Encourages Member States to focus on developing the foundations for Transformational Growth, comprised of a mechanism for delivering funds by requesting cooperation among national and regional financial institutions addressing development for the purpose of closing the gap between the demand of funds and actual funding granted for new development projects, increased regional cohesion and trade, and improved infrastructure, in order to achieve the Arab Development Outlook Vision 2030 via:

a. Increasing Member States capacity to deliver necessary utilities to improve productivity and stability of supply chains by requesting a report from the secretariat aimed at identifying inefficiencies cause by legal barriers and regulations with the intent of reducing costs and time in queueing, storage in warehouses and ports, and travel time along the supply chain;

b. Encouraging the accomplishment of such objectives by:

  i. Emphasizing the need for energy grids capable of providing constant energy year round without interruption and increasing Member States’ capacity to deliver necessary utilities;

  ii. Strongly encouraging Member States to collaborate with the Union of Arab Banks in its efforts to create a Arab Regional and Infrastructure Development Bank;

  iii. Further strongly encourages Member States support the development of the equivalent of an Arab Silk Road through investing in infrastructural development that may bolster regional trade and use the knowledge of the Committee of Transport and Logistics to facilitate this endeavor by offering itself as a neutral forum to tackle these issues;

c. Reaffirming its commitment to collaborate with regional and local actors such as the League of Arab States, regional development banks, and ECOSOC in the framework of the regional cooperation mechanism, which meets bi-annually, strongly encouraging collaboration directed at sharing best practices and developing these competencies and the flow of funds by utilizing the Task Force on SDG Data as well as the Statistical Committee with the objective to identify high-impact investments targeted at industries critical for Transformational Growth;

d. Further reaffirming Member States’ core belief that such efforts are strongly aided through the support of Member States foreign diaspora of highly productive workers and declares its commitment to attracting said human capital by incentivizing such returns;

4. Further invites Member States to attract investment from local and regional businesses oriented towards social and human development to attain the goals of Transformational Growth in the ADO, through measures such as, but not limited to:
a. Recommending that appropriate attention is given by policy-makers and public institutions to Small and Medium Impact Investment initiatives, and that there is no disproportionate large-scale investor bias;

b. Encouraging investments with positive externalities so profit-oriented projects can also produce social and environmental benefits, such as, but not limited to:
   i. Educational programs;
   ii. Accessible basic services such as housing and health care;

c. Helping with the networking of potential start-ups that are interested in development and social impact, with successful regional development institutions such as the AGA Khan Fund, so that start-ups can model after, and delineate from their framework.