

Resolutions adopted by the Commission at its sixty-eighth session

- 68/1 Reaffirming the special case and the unique and particular vulnerabilities of small island developing States with a focus on the Pacific
- 68/2 Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 in the Asia-Pacific region
- 68/3 Enabling paperless trade and the cross-border recognition of electronic data and documents for inclusive and sustainable intraregional trade facilitation
- 68/4 Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016), and the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport
- 68/5 Asia-Pacific Years of Action for Applications of Space Technology and the Geographic Information System for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development, 2012-2017
- 68/6 Asia-Pacific regional preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014
- 68/7 Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022
- 68/8 Enhancing coordination within the United Nations system and cooperation with regional organizations for promoting regional development
- 68/9 Terms of reference of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission
- 68/10 Enhancing regional economic integration in Asia and the Pacific
- 68/11 Connectivity for energy security

Resolution 68/1

Reaffirming the special case and the unique and particular vulnerabilities of small island developing States with a focus on the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling Agenda 21, which recognized that small island developing States and islands supporting small communities were a special case for both environment and development,

Also recalling the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, which acknowledged that small island developing States were a special case for both environment and development,

Further recalling the outcome document of the High-level Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, recalls since 1992, the vulnerability of Pacific small island developing States has become of increasing concern while their capacity to cope had not, and that this was due in no small part to the additional pressures of climate change, climate variability and sea-level rise, which had been compounded by the international fuel, food and financial crises,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 65/2, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the unique and particular vulnerabilities of the small island developing States and called for improved and additional measures, and for coordinated, balanced and integrated actions to be taken at all levels to further implement the Mauritius Strategy,

Noting that, occupying about one third of the earth's surface, the Pacific Ocean provides a significant global environmental, economic, social and developmental contribution to sustainable development,

Recognizing that Pacific small island developing States share the same vulnerabilities as those of other small island developing States and are economically and ecologically fragile and vulnerable, while their small size, limited resources, geographic dispersion and isolation from markets place them at a disadvantage economically and prevents economies of scale,

Noting the joint statement issued by the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and the Secretary-General at the forty-second Pacific Islands Forum, in Auckland, New Zealand, on 7 and 8 September 2011,

Welcoming the support provided by the secretariat of the Commission, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Development Programme and the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific to Pacific small island developing States in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development,

1. *Reaffirms* the special case and the unique and particular vulnerabilities of Pacific small island developing States for sustainable development;

2. *Invites* members and associate members, as appropriate:

(a) To recognize the importance of the oceans and the sustainable development of ocean resources to Pacific small island developing States,

including the need for the conservation and sustainable management of the Pacific Ocean and coastal environments for the benefit of small island developing States and as a global resource;

(b) To support efforts for the sustainable management, conservation and use of ocean resources;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, international financial institutions, other organizations and bilateral donors:

(a) To continue to support capacity development and capacity supplementation for Pacific small island developing States to pursue sustainable development and to increase their resilience, including in response to the challenges of climate change;

(b) To improve access to finance so that Pacific small island developing States can transform their economies towards sustainable development and climate resilience;

(c) To promote and support voluntary technology transfer as a contribution to the sustainable development of Pacific small island developing States;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its seventieth session.

*Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012*

Resolution 68/2
Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 in the Asia-Pacific region

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 63/227 of 19 December 2008 on the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010, in which it, inter alia, decided to convene, as called for in paragraph 114 of the Programme of Action, the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries at a high level in 2011,

Also recalling its resolution 64/6 of 30 April 2008 on achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the ESCAP region, in which it, inter alia, requested the Executive Secretary to assist countries in the region in achieving the Goals, in particular the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and Pacific island developing countries,

Expressing concern at the slow pace of progress in the least developed countries in closing these development gaps,

Reaffirming that the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (the Istanbul Programme of Action), which was adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, has as an overarching goal to overcome the structural challenges faced by the least developed countries in order to eradicate poverty, sustain inclusive growth and improve the quality of life,

Emphasizing the need for continued international support and mobilizing technical and financial resources to achieve internationally agreed development goals to enable graduation from least developed country status in the stipulated time,

Noting the need to further intensify the engagement of the international community in the attainment of the goals and targets agreed in the Istanbul Programme of Action, including the mobilization of additional international support measures and action in favour of the least developed countries and the formation of a renewed partnership between these countries and their development partners,

Noting with appreciation the convening, from 14 to 16 December 2011 in Bangkok, of the Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting on the Implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action, which adopted a Regional Road Map containing a set of capacity development activities and identifying the key agencies and entities that could be involved in delivering these activities,

1. *Urges* the countries of the region and international and regional organizations to accelerate the implementation, as appropriate, of the recommendations contained in the Istanbul Programme of Action and the Regional Road Map for Implementing the Istanbul Programme of Action in the Asian and Pacific Region from 2011 to 2020 in particular;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To assist the Asia-Pacific least developed countries in implementing the Regional Road Map;

(b) To continue to assist Asia-Pacific least developed countries in achieving internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(c) To submit to the Commission at its sixty-ninth session a report on the progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution.

Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012

Resolution 68/3

Enabling paperless trade and the cross-border recognition of electronic data and documents for inclusive and sustainable intraregional trade facilitation

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Conscious of the importance of trade as an engine of growth and development and of the need to increase the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of international trade transactions to maintain the competitiveness of the region,

Recognizing that electronic commerce enhances the expansion of trade opportunities, the importance of avoiding barriers to its use and development, and the need to promote uniformity in the application of international standards and to aim for interoperability of paperless trade systems,

Also recognizing the potential of paperless trade in making international trade transactions more efficient and transparent,

Noting that the trade and supply-chain security initiatives under implementation in major export markets will make it increasingly necessary for all actors in the international supply chain to exchange data and documents electronically,

Considering the fact that many countries in the Asia-Pacific region are currently engaged in implementing national electronic single window or related systems to expedite the processing of trade documents,

Aware that the benefits from these and related paperless trade systems would be greatly enhanced if the electronic documents generated by them could be used across borders,

Also aware that facilitating the cross-border recognition and electronic exchange of trade documents between landlocked and transit countries would significantly contribute to the implementation of Commission resolution 67/1 on the Ulaanbaatar Declaration: Outcome of the High-level Asia-Pacific Policy Dialogue on the Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action and other Development Gaps Faced by the Landlocked Developing Countries as well as the Almaty Programme of Action, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 58/201 of 23 December 2003,

Recalling that, during its sixty-seventh session, the Commission supported the intent of the secretariat to promote and develop innovative projects that made effective use of information and communications technology in the area of transport, and the use of information and communications technology in the area of trade,

Emphasizing the need to enable the cross-border use and recognition of electronic trade data and documents, and the need for all countries to adopt single window and mutual recognition of documents, as part of efforts to facilitate exports from least developed and landlocked developing countries,

Taking note of the proposal of the Committee on Trade and Investment supporting a regional agreement on electronic trade data and document exchange,

1. *Invites* member States to work towards the development of regional arrangements on the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade;

2. *Encourages* all members and associate members:

(a) To support and participate in the knowledge-sharing and capacity-building activities of the United Nations Network of Experts for Paperless Trade in Asia and the Pacific, including the Asia-Pacific Trade Facilitation Forum and related activities supported by regional and international organizations active in the field of trade facilitation;

(b) To initiate or accelerate the implementation of national paperless trade systems, including national single windows defined in United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business recommendation No. 33 and related recommendation No. 35;

(c) To take into account, and whenever possible adopt, available international standards made by relevant United Nations bodies, such as the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business, and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, and other international organizations, such as the World Customs Organization and the International Organization for Standardization, when implementing these systems so as to facilitate their interoperability;

(d) To participate in the development of new international standards to achieve the seamless exchange and recognition of trade-related information and documents across borders among all relevant stakeholders from both the public and private sectors;

(e) To share lessons learned and the outcomes of existing bilateral and subregional pilot projects on the recognition and exchange of trade-related electronic data and documents with other members and associate members, and to initiate new ones;

(f) To consider entering into bilateral and subregional agreements on the cross-border recognition and exchange of trade-related documents as building blocks towards regional and global cross-border paperless trade;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To support and facilitate the process for the development of regional arrangements on the facilitation of cross-border paperless trade, including by conducting studies, developing potential options, and organizing expert review and member consultations, and in this regard to present its results to the Committee on Trade and Investment at its third session;

(b) To ensure that the regional arrangements take into account and are consistent with the existing international and regional agreements, mechanisms, and undertakings as well as build on existing international standards and conventions and are developed in consultation with the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law, the World Customs Organization and other relevant international bodies;

(c) To continue and further strengthen the secretariat's support for capacity-building activities related to trade facilitation and paperless trade, including transit facilitation, particularly with regard to least developed and landlocked developing countries and for the preparation, in consultation with member States, of such regional arrangements;

4. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventieth session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012

Resolution 68/4

Implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016), and the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Welcoming the successful outcome of the Ministerial Conference on Transport, held in Bangkok from 12 to 16 March 2012,

1. *Endorses* the Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016), and the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport, as contained in the annex to the present resolution;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the Regional Action Programme and the Regional Strategic Framework;

(b) To carry out in 2016 an evaluation of the implementation of phase II of the Regional Action Programme and submit a report with recommendations to the Ministerial Conference on Transport at its third session;

(c) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first and seventy-third sessions on the implementation of the present resolution.

*Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012*

Annex

Ministerial Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific

We, the Ministers of transport and representatives of the members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific attending the Ministerial Conference on Transport, held in Bangkok from 12 to 16 March 2012,

Recognizing the crucial importance of efficient, reliable and safe transport infrastructure and services to regional integration and the sustainable and inclusive economic and social development of countries in the ESCAP region,

Recalling Commission resolution 63/9 of 23 May 2007 on the implementation of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2007-2011), and Commission resolution 66/4 of 19 May 2010 on the implementation of the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia,

Recalling also the Almaty Programme of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries, the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 (the Istanbul Programme of Action),

Recognizing the need for long-term commitment and continuity in addressing critical issues in the transport sector to support sustained economic growth, improve the living standards of our peoples and further increase the competitiveness of economies of the region,

Encouraged by the successful regional cooperation that led to the entry into force of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network, and progress in the formulation of an intergovernmental agreement on dry ports,

Recognizing that growth in intraregional trade can be further supported if regional transport corridors are expanded and bottlenecks removed,

Reaffirming our commitment to the implementation of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, and the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia,

1. *Adopt* the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016),

2. *Adopt* the Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport,

3. *Request* the Executive Secretary to continue to accord priority to the implementation of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016), especially to assist regional members and associate members in their efforts to realize the vision of a sustainable international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system,

4. *Also request* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To ensure effective coordination with other United Nations and multilateral agencies as well as subregional organizations;

(b) To collaborate effectively with international and regional financing institutions, multilateral and bilateral donors and private sector investors and international organizations to mobilize further financial and technical support for the wider development and operationalization of the Trans-Asian Railway and the Asian Highway;

(c) To convene a ministerial conference on transport in 2016 to assess and evaluate the implementation of the Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016), and to consider a future programme of work.

Appendix I

Regional Action Programme for Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific, phase II (2012-2016)

Now more than ever, the region's development is reliant on its transport system. Whether to carry manufactured and agricultural products to international markets, food to rural and urban communities, workers to their jobs, the young to schools or the sick to hospitals, transport is essential. While development patterns across the region vary, countries that have been able to improve transport capacities and efficiency have been the most successful. For the future, improved transport connections to fast growing regional markets will further stimulate economic and social development.

The overarching goal of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific and its Regional Action Programme is to foster regional transport cooperation and economic integration in support of inclusive and sustainable development. The Regional Action Programme, phase II (2012-2016), will provide continuity and build on the substantial progress that has been achieved over the past five years.

In each of the substantive areas, capacity-building and exchanges of experience will be a central theme in continuing to work towards the creation of a sustainable international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system as the long-term vision for the development of the region's transport system and to meet the challenges of globalization.

In the implementation of the Regional Action Programme, phase II (2012-2016), the ESCAP secretariat will continue to work closely with key United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, subregional organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other collaborating institutions.

1. Policy guidance at the ministerial level

Given the rapid pace of change in the region, there is a need for timely policy direction at the ministerial level to maintain and accelerate progress in moving towards the realization of an international integrated intermodal transport and logistics system in the region. The Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport at its first session, held in Bangkok from 14 to 18 December 2009, provided substantive guidance and direction that was subsequently welcomed by the Commission in its resolution 66/4 of 19 May 2010 on the implementation of the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia.

Immediate objective: to promote regional cooperation and policy leadership at the ministerial level for the advancement of transport as a key to regional development.

Outputs:

1. A meeting of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport at the midpoint of the implementation of the Regional Action Programme, phase II (2012-2016);
2. Ministerial consideration and direction to transport policies in the region.

Indicators of achievement:

1. High level participation in the meeting of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport.
2. Documented decisions by transport ministers leading to a greater degree of coordination and consistency between countries on issues of mutual interest.

2. Transport infrastructure development

While the intergovernmental agreements on the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks provide the foundation for regional connectivity, the quality and capacity of this infrastructure across the region is uneven, and some links are still missing. In most countries, intermodal transport is limited due to a lack of capacity in dry ports.

Immediate objective: to promote regional and interregional connectivity and cooperation through the further development and upgrading of the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks as well as Euro-Asian transport linkages and dry ports.

Outputs:

1. Meetings of the working groups on the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway;
2. Intergovernmental agreement on dry ports;
3. Studies, meetings and capacity-building on integrated transport development, upgrading and maintenance (asset management) of the Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway, dry ports of international importance and seaports;
4. Studies on international intermodal transport corridors serving inter- and intraregional trade;
5. Updated information and data measuring progress in the development of regionally important transport infrastructure and operations;
6. Activities within the joint UNESCAP-UNECE project on the development of Euro-Asian transport links.

Indicators of achievement:

1. Adopted amendments to the Intergovernmental Agreements on the Asian Highway Network and Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network.
2. Member States negotiate and sign an intergovernmental agreement on dry ports.
3. Measures taken by member States to upgrade and expand the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway networks and internationally recognized dry ports in their countries.
4. Measures taken by member States to incorporate study recommendations for regional and interregional intermodal transport corridors.

3. Transport facilitation

Despite efforts to eliminate non-physical barriers in transport, progress has been slow due to the complexity of this challenge. This can be seen most clearly in international land transport, which still faces substantial difficulties across the region. To help resolve this problem, a number of subregional agreements on cross-border/transit transport have been negotiated and signed, but few have been fully or effectively implemented. In many countries of the region, international transport by road is restricted by the number of transport permits issued and is only allowed near borders or along a limited number of routes. While progress has been made,

lengthy delays at border crossings are common. Similarly, with regard to railways, simplifying and harmonizing documents and procedures and expanding intercountry services remain major outstanding challenges. All of these restrictions raise costs and create delays in international land transport.

Immediate objective: to promote efficient and smooth movement of goods, passengers and vehicles by road and rail across the region, including at border crossings.

Outputs:

1. Establishment of a regional network of legal and technical experts on transport facilitation and the development of an action plan for the implementation of the regional strategic framework for the facilitation of international road transport;
2. Workshops/studies on regional and subregional cooperation under the regional strategic framework for facilitation of international road transport;
3. A study to identify the issues surrounding regional cooperation for the facilitation of international railway transport;
4. Assistance in acceding to and implementing international transport facilitation conventions and agreements, including those recommended in ESCAP resolution 48/11 of 23 April 1992 on road and rail transport modes in relation to facilitation measures, and in formulating and implementing subregional agreements related to the facilitation of international transport by road and/or rail;
5. Advisory services/workshops on the establishment or strengthening of national facilitation coordination mechanisms and on joint controls at borders to facilitate international road and/or rail transport;
6. Studies/workshops on the application of information and communications technology and other new technologies as well as the time/cost-distance toolkit to facilitate international road and/or rail transport.

Indicators of achievement:

1. A regional network of legal and technical experts on transport facilitation established.
2. Measures taken by member States and regional and subregional organizations/institutions to implement the regional strategic framework for the facilitation of international road transport.
3. Measures taken by member States to accede to and implement international facilitation conventions, in particular those recommended by the Commission in its resolution 48/11, and steps suggested to be taken for signing, ratifying and/or implementing subregional agreements.
4. National facilitation coordination mechanisms established or strengthened, and measures towards joint controls taken, by the member States.
5. Measures taken by member States to apply new technologies and time/cost-distance methodology to improve efficiency of international transport processes.

4. Transport logistics

In many countries of the region, the logistics industries are still at a nascent stage and therefore face challenges associated with high costs and poor performance. To develop an efficient logistics system, all relevant issues need to be addressed comprehensively. In this respect, an enabling environment, including a policy and regulatory framework, needs to be put in place. Transport logistics policy is a very important component of overall logistics policy, and its development can act as an entry point and contribute to wider logistics policy goals. Other measures for enhancing the professionalism and competence of logistics service providers include the establishment of minimum standards and codes of conduct at the national level, the sharing of knowledge and experiences at the regional level, and the establishment of sustainable training and capacity-building programmes at the national, subregional and regional levels.

Immediate objective: to assist countries in developing transport logistics policies and in enhancing the professionalism and competence of logistics service providers.

Outputs:

1. Guidelines for the development of transport logistics policies;
2. Guidelines for the establishment of minimum standards and codes of conduct for logistics service providers;
3. Regional meetings of freight forwarders, multimodal transport operators and logistics service providers and their national associations;
4. Technical assistance and support to the industry and to governments for a sustainable training programme.

Indicators of achievement:

1. Measures taken by member States to incorporate guidelines for transport logistics policies into national logistics policies.
2. Measures taken by member States to incorporate guidelines for logistics service providers into national legislation and/or industry regulations.
3. Experience and knowledge shared among freight forwarders, multimodal transport operators and logistics service providers.
4. Sustainable training programmes on freight forwarding, multimodal transport and logistics established by countries.

5. Finance and private sector participation

There is massive demand for investment in the transport sector in terms of infrastructure and services as well as maintenance. Most countries are constrained by limited budgets, however. Some countries in the region have been successful in establishing innovative mechanisms for finance and investment, including public-private partnerships (PPP) and other revenue-generating approaches that have created new and expanded financing opportunities, but the application of partnership processes is hampered by numerous constraints, including a lack of skills and experience in the areas of PPP project development, implementation, contract management and the streamlining of administrative processes.

Immediate objective: to promote regional cooperation between the public and private sectors for financing and maintaining infrastructure.

Outputs:

1. Studies on investment in Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway sections and in intermodal linkages, including dry ports, river ports and seaports;
2. Investment forums to promote partnerships and the sharing of experiences in financing the Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway, internationally recognized dry ports, river ports and seaports;
3. Assessment and promotion of policy options and initiatives for the financing of road maintenance;
4. Support for regional cooperation and networking among PPP units/programmes;
5. Assistance to member countries and institutions through the sharing of good practices and the delivery of PPP capacity development programmes;
6. Technical assistance in assessing PPP readiness.

Indicators of achievement:

1. Measures taken by member States to increase investment in transport and logistics infrastructure, including through public-private partnerships, in line with the secretariat's proposals and policy advice.
2. Measures taken by member States to incorporate recommendations for the maintenance of road transport.
3. Recorded exchanges of information and reports of meetings.

6. Sustainable transport development

The transport sector is the third largest energy user in the region. Transport is also one of the fastest growing sectors in the region. Expectations are that energy costs will continue to rise, thus increasing pressure on all sectors to seek greater efficiency, and that the levels of harmful emissions will continue to increase unless appropriate measures are taken. In the transport sector, substantial gains can be made through modal shifts and improved organizational efficiency.

Immediate objective: to increase awareness and understanding of alternative freight transport policy options that can reduce energy consumption and emissions.

Outputs:

1. Proposals to encourage, through appropriate mechanisms, a modal shift from road to rail and water transport, and the use of the Asian Highway, Trans-Asian Railway and dry ports for the intermodal distribution of goods and carriage of people;
2. Regional meetings to share experiences in the adoption of energy-efficient and more environmentally friendly freight transport logistics systems;
3. Inclusion of sustainable transport-related issues in the *Review of Developments in Transport in Asia and the Pacific*, the *Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific* and ad hoc regional transport policy studies;

4. Capacity-building to increase awareness and promote environmentally sustainable transport development.

Indicators of achievement:

1. Measures taken by member States to promote modal shift policies in line with the secretariat's proposals and policy advice.
2. Measures taken by member States to consider sustainable transport issues when designing transport policies and projects.

7. Road safety

Road accidents cause human tragedies every minute of every day. In the Asia Pacific region, 700,000 lives or approximately half of the global road fatalities occur each year. The issue of road safety has received greater prominence in recent times with the Ministerial Declaration on Improving Road Safety in Asia and the Pacific (November 2006) and the United Nations General Assembly resolution 64/255 (2 March 2010). Despite these global initiatives, road safety in many countries of the region is still not receiving priority in national planning or policies.

Immediate objective: to assist countries in the region in meeting their commitments under the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020).

Outputs:

1. Meetings and technical assistance to aid countries in building road safety management capacity in line with the Decade of Action for Road Safety, including data collection and monitoring progress;
2. Meetings to advocate high-level commitment to road safety interventions and to exchange best practices in improving road safety;
3. Advisory services and technical support to national road safety campaigns and related awareness creation activities;
4. A web-based road safety network.

Indicators of achievement:

1. Measures taken by member States to implement policies and programmes on road safety in line with the goals of the Decade of Action for Road Safety.
2. Measures taken by member States to improve road safety data and information collection systems.
3. Documented best practices in improving road safety, shared through meetings and a web-based road safety network.

8. Transport and the Millennium Development Goals

While the Millennium Development Goals do not include specific references to transport, it is now widely accepted that transport infrastructure and services play a critical role in addressing the Goals. Many countries in the region suffer large spatial inequalities with regards to income, wealth and opportunity. This is due to a lack of all-weather roads to villages, infrequent or unreliable transport services to outlying areas and islands, poor access to deeper hinterlands and weak rural-urban connectivity. Poor maintenance of infrastructure, particularly

roads, reduces their asset value and increases vehicle operating costs, transit times and safety risk for users. There is tremendous potential to enhance the contribution of transport interventions to efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. To realize this potential, Governments must integrate poverty reduction and Goal-related policy objectives into their transport programmes and projects during the early stages of formulation and programming.

Immediate objective: to encourage the inclusion of Millennium Development Goals considerations in the planning and implementation of regional transport interventions.

Outputs:

1. Studies and workshops on mainstreaming Millennium Development Goals considerations into transport planning and policies as appropriate, in particular, in infrastructure development, farm-to-market logistics, food security and road safety;
2. The exchange of experiences between member countries regarding the development of transport infrastructure and services to provide rural communities with physical access and connect them to national and regional trunk road systems;
3. Preparatory activities in support of the 10-year review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action in 2013.

Indicators of achievement:

1. Measures taken by member States to mainstream Millennium Development Goals into transport programmes and policies, with particular focus on relevant areas of the Regional Action Programme.
2. Adoption of recommendations from the regional input document at the global meeting on the 10-year review of the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action.

9. Inter-island shipping

The provision of efficient, reliable and affordable shipping services to, from, between and within island and archipelagic developing countries presents a number of unique constraints and challenges. These include long voyage distances, imbalanced cargo flows and low unit values of exports as well as challenges in matching ship size, service speed, port capacity, safety and comfort with low and often irregular traffic volumes. In some cases, these challenges lead to unprofitable routes or “cherry-picking” of the most lucrative or profitable shipments, leaving the less attractive shipments to others. This results in a “vicious downward spiral” as the regularity, reliability and affordability of services deteriorates. These challenges can arise domestically, subregionally and internationally.

Immediate objective: to assist in identifying possible approaches to enhancing the regularity, reliability and affordability of the shipping services of archipelagic and island developing countries.

Outputs:

1. Studies, capacity-building activities and policy recommendations on effective strategies for securing regular, reliable and affordable inter-island shipping services for the consideration of archipelagic and island developing countries;

2. Advisory services and technical support to member countries, upon request, regarding the implementation of policy measures to support inter-island shipping.

Indicators of achievement:

1. Measures taken by member States to incorporate recommendations on inter-island shipping in line with the secretariat's proposals and policy advice.

10. Connecting subregional transport networks

Across the Asia-Pacific region, intergovernmental organizations and programmes have been active in promoting physical and institutional connectivity within their own subregions. The conclusion of the associated agreements and the implementation of initiatives have led to the establishment of differing legal and operating regimes for the inter-subregional movement of goods, vehicles and passengers. These differences can act as physical and non-physical barriers to smooth and efficient transport between subregions.

Immediate objective: to identify physical and non-physical constraints to inter-subregional connectivity and to provide a platform for building closer collaboration among subregional entities in the development of transport.

Outputs:

1. Draft documents outlining potential issues that need to be addressed in order to improve physical and institutional connectivity between subregions;
2. Meetings of ESCAP member countries, subregional organizations and subregional programmes (back-to-back with relevant legislative meetings) to consider collaborative actions that support inter-subregional connectivity;
3. Technical assistance and support in the implementation of inter-subregional connectivity initiatives for the development of transport.

Indicators of achievement:

1. Measures taken by member States on improving subregional connectivity in line with the secretariat's proposals and policy advice.
2. Inclusion of proposals and issues raised by the secretariat in the agendas of meetings of member countries and subregional organisations/programmes.

Appendix II

Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport

The objective of the regional strategic framework is to help regional member countries and their development partners increase the effectiveness of facilitation programmes and projects and accelerate the development of international road transport through long-term targets.

The framework provides general direction for member countries and their development partners when formulating facilitation policy, agreements, programmes and projects as well as related measures. It also helps promote common approaches to addressing facilitation issues with a view to reducing the complexity of the present system.

The framework also helps bring together national, bilateral, subregional and regional efforts in a more coordinated way to accelerate the process of transport facilitation.

Recognizing the prerequisite nature of some of the non-physical barriers that prevent international road transport, it is proposed that the regional strategic framework initially focus on the fundamental elements of international road transport and the key modalities for facilitation.

I. Fundamental elements of international road transport

A. Road transport permits and traffic rights

1. Description of the issue

Across Asia, international movement by road is largely confined to border areas and a limited number of roads. Most transport permits are issued for only a single trip along a designated route by a specified individual vehicle. Another constraint to international road transport is the restriction of transit operations. As a result, goods carried by road often have to be trans-shipped at border areas or loading points along a designated route. This adds needless costs and delays to the transport process.

2. Target

Wider application of multiple-entry transport permits issued to a carrier for any compliant vehicle in its fleet. Such permits, valid for one year, could be used on multiple routes or road networks for both interstate and transit transport operations. In addition, multilateral transport permits should be promoted for wider application in parallel with bilateral transport permits.

3. Process

When member countries formulate or renew their bilateral and multilateral agreements on international road transport or hold consultations on the implementation of the agreements, they may consider adopting transport permits valid for multiple entries with one year validity and/or on multiple routes or road networks and allow their competent authorities to issue the permits to their carriers instead of particular vehicles.

B. Visas for professional drivers and crews of road vehicles

1. Description of the issue

Unlike seafarers and aircrews, professional road vehicle drivers do not benefit from streamlined global arrangements for the issuance of visas or temporary entry to undertake international transport operations. Visa issuance for professional road vehicle drivers is largely subject to bilateral agreements on visas. In recent years, some countries have tried to address the issue through subregional arrangements. International organizations have also made an effort to help facilitate visa issuance for professional road vehicle drivers. In spite of this, there is still no specific visa category for vehicle drivers in many countries and in most countries in the region they are considered either visitors or foreign labourers for the purpose of visa issuance.

Professional road vehicle drivers have to go through complicated and difficult procedures to apply for visas and are generally granted only a single-entry visa each time. In some countries, drivers are required to apply for visas in person

at embassies or consulates in major cities and wait a week or more to either obtain a visa or to learn that their application has been rejected.

As a result, visa difficulties continue to cause delays in the delivery of goods and sometimes require the changing of vehicles or at least drivers at border crossings.

2. Target

As a minimum target, regional member countries may pursue multiple-entry visas valid for one year for professional drivers and crews of road vehicles. Countries may also agree to a uniform set of documents and basic procedures.

3. Process

In order to achieve this target, the competent national authorities for international road transport can act as intermediaries to facilitate the issuance of visas by embassies or consulates. The competent national authority in one country may, as appropriate, prepare a list of professional drivers and exchange it with their counterpart in another country for onward transmission to ministries of foreign affairs, embassies or consulates. Alternatively, the competent national authorities may provide certifying letters along with guarantees from carriers when drivers apply for visas.

The transport authorities need to consult with ministries of foreign affairs when they negotiate subregional facilitation agreements that include clauses for visa arrangements. If necessary, they should request relevant authorities to negotiate bilateral/subregional visa arrangements for professional drivers.

C. Temporary importation of road vehicles

1. Description of the issue

In most countries where vehicles are permitted to cross borders, it is common to use a guarantee of some sort (such as a bond, a cash deposit through a local agent or the payment of a one-time charge upon each entry) to satisfy the requirements of the Customs authorities. Only a few countries in the region do not impose such requirements.

There exist a few international conventions relating to temporary admissions to which most countries in the region have not acceded.

The use of unified subregional agreements and a subregional guarantee system is not the most convenient solution for carriers, but it does help avoid cash or bond deposits or charges at each border and for travel through several countries. However, charges for the use of the documents and guarantees issued under this system can be a major concern. If such charges are higher than the one-time charge of a fixed amount at border crossings, the guarantee system loses its advantages.

2. Target

As a minimum regional standard, the application of international conventions on temporary importation should be encouraged.

3. Process

The countries that have not acceded to the international conventions on temporary importation should take steps to gradually promote the same. These conventions have identical commitments with respect to the temporary importation

of vehicles. The countries that are already contracting parties may take action to ensure that practical arrangements for full implementation are put in place.

D. Insurance of vehicles

1. Description of the issue

Insurance is commonly required to be purchased at each border crossing throughout the region, which causes delays and obliges drivers to obtain individual receipts for cash payments. Although subregional insurance schemes have been planned for many years, much remains to be done before such schemes can become operational.

2. Target

Third-party insurance should be used as a regional minimum standard for vehicles undertaking international road transport through the use of either the Green Card system or a similar subregional system.

3. Process

It is desirable for member countries to join the Green Card system. Countries in subregions that have road transport links with Europe may adopt the Green Card system for easy access to Europe. Countries in other subregions may develop subregional motor vehicle third-party insurance schemes compatible with the Green Card system while maintaining the long-term goal of acceding to the Green Card system. For countries that are not participating in any subregional insurance scheme, bilateral or trilateral arrangements based on the Green Card system may be considered.

E. Vehicle weights and dimensions

1. Description of the issue

For many regional member countries, damage to roads and bridges caused by overweight vehicles is a serious problem which can be compounded by overloaded foreign vehicles. The problem exists partly because different countries have different technical standards on permissible weights and dimensions, and partly because some carriers desire to turn a higher profit through fewer runs with heavier loads.

At the same time, repeated weighing and inspections at border crossings and inland weight stations for international vehicles impede transport efficiency. Carriers have requested that weighing procedures be simplified and that the number of weighings and inspections within countries reduced.

There is no international or regional standard on weights or dimensions of vehicles permitted to travel on roads. Member countries have been trying to harmonize or unify standards at the subregional level. Bilateral agreements on international road transport normally require carriers to observe the domestic standards of host countries, which are mostly different from the countries where the carriers are registered.

2. Target

For healthy and sustainable development of international road transport in the region, it would be helpful if permissible weights and dimensions of vehicles, including axle loads, became unified at the bilateral, trilateral, quadrilateral and subregional levels.

3. Process

A practical approach could be to unify such standards through bilateral and multilateral, including trilateral, quadrilateral and subregional arrangements.

Member countries may also consider negotiating a control system for overloaded vehicles through bilateral and multilateral agreements. The control system may include fines together with warning notices and suspension of transport permits.

F. Vehicle registration and inspection certificates

1. Description of the issue

Currently, ESCAP member countries use bilateral or multilateral agreements to mutually recognize vehicle registration and inspection certificates. However, the use of characters of national languages in registration certificates and number plates is still common. This causes difficulties when border crossing officials attempt to clear vehicles for entry. It also causes difficulties for traffic police and will cause further difficulties when electronic clearance systems are introduced.

For mutual recognition of vehicle registration certificates, standardized distinguishing signs of the State of registration, detailed requirements of technical conditions and periodic inspections of vehicles as well as the standardized registration number plates or marks of vehicles need to be used. The registration number plates or marks should be composed of either Arabic numerals or Arabic numerals and capital Latin characters, as defined in the Convention on Road Traffic [1968].

2. Target

Adoption of the standards on vehicle registration certificates, number plates or marks, and country distinguishing signs, as contained in the Convention on Road Traffic [1968], should be encouraged.

3. Process

Countries that have not yet become contracting parties to the Convention on Road Traffic [1968] need to take measures to accede to it.

Countries that would find it difficult to accede to the Convention in the short term may consider adopting the standards contained in the Convention, as well as exploring the possibility of using other mechanisms that are consistent with that convention and avoiding the use of different standards in any bilateral and multilateral agreements into which they may enter.

II. Key modalities for facilitating international road transport

Valuable experience has been gained in the region, and a wealth of knowledge exists at the national, subregional and regional levels with respect to successful and less successful approaches to both the formulation and subsequent implementation of transport agreements. To provide a focus for collaborative efforts, cooperation and exchange of experiences among member countries, the key modalities described below are suggested.

A. Building an effective legal regime

International conventions, subregional and bilateral agreements have a vital role to play.

1. Establishment of a regional network of legal experts on transport facilitation

Promoting and implementing international facilitation conventions, formulating and implementing subregional agreements, concluding bilateral agreements and harmonizing documentation and procedures all rely on national, subregional and international legal experts. A regional network of national and subregional negotiators and legal experts from governments, transport associations and academic institutions could therefore play a vital role by providing advice and promoting the harmonization and coordination of different legal instruments on transport facilitation.

Through the network, member countries and subregional organizations/institutions would be able to do the following:

- Exchange information
- Coordinate with each other
- Pinpoint areas of legal conflict between different subregional agreements and their implications
- Suggest solutions to legal conflicts where a country is party to two or more agreements
- Suggest ways to connect countries located in different subregions that are party to different agreements the existence of which impedes
- Share experiences

The network might also help promote international facilitation conventions and the formulation and implementation of subregional facilitation agreements and assist in the development and improvement of bilateral agreements on international road transport. It would become a network of core professionals on legal issues surrounding road transport facilitation in the region, providing legal support for formulation and implementation of agreements.

The network may exchange information through electronic communication, seminars, training, expert meetings, group studies and individual studies. The ESCAP secretariat may provide secretarial support to the network and financial support for some years. In the long run, the network would operate independently with the secretarial support of ESCAP and undertake studies as requested by governmental agencies, ESCAP and other organizations/institutions.

2. Accession to selected international facilitation conventions

Commission resolution 48/11 provides countries in the region with a common and harmonized set of standards in the field of international land transport facilitation through an initial set of conventions to which countries in the ESCAP region could accede.

A study undertaken by the secretariat in 2006, as requested by the Commission, concluded with the proposal that three further international legal instruments were added to complement those recommended in resolution 48/11:

- (a) The Protocol to the Convention on the Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road, 1978;

(b) The revised Kyoto Convention on the Simplification and Harmonization of Customs Procedures, 1999;

(c) The Convention on Temporary Admission (Istanbul Convention), 1990.

Together, the 10 international legal instruments can provide a consistent framework for simplification and harmonization of regional facilitation initiatives in line with international standards.

Member countries that have not acceded to the core conventions, as amended, need to consider doing so. If acceding involves a prolonged process due to internal procedures, then member countries should consider adopting the standards set in the conventions at the level of national legislation as a transitional measure.

Effective implementation of the international conventions is as equally important as accession to the conventions. Member countries need to review the obligations of the international conventions together with their existing legislation and practices, and to adjust, as appropriate, their legislation, documentation and procedures relating to international road transport.

3. Subregional agreements

The key intention behind subregional agreements on international road transport facilitation is to open up subregional traffic, harmonize and simplify formalities and procedures and establish common standards while maintaining consistency with international conventions. Effective implementation of subregional agreements has become an important but challenging task for most regional member countries.

The implementation of subregional agreements involves many ministries and authorities. It also requires amendments to domestic legislation, existing formalities and procedures, and the functions of some agencies and authorities. Strong political support from member countries is needed in order to implement such agreements. Financial and technical support from international organizations and institutions is also needed. Regional advocacy needs to be enhanced to help draw the attention of national Governments and the international community to this important issue.

4. Bilateral agreements

In view of difficulties in the management and implementation of numerous bilateral agreements on international road transport faced by many countries in the region, a regional strategy may be taken to apply international conventions and subregional agreements wherever possible and using bilateral agreements to cover the areas which cannot be realized through international conventions and subregional agreements. The development of a model guideline with a recommended standard structure for bilateral agreements on international road transport could assist member countries in better formulating and implementing numerous bilateral agreements while at the same time working towards greater harmonization.

B. Wider applications of new technologies

The application of new technologies, including information and communications technology applications can significantly enhance road transport facilitation. Building modern border crossings and international road transport equipped with new technologies and electronic declaration systems should be

further promoted. The use of new technologies to facilitate border-crossing controls for international road transport is still relatively new within the region. Before such technologies can be fully utilized, legislation needs to be amended and existing formalities and procedures need to be simplified. Regional experience with innovative and integrated applications of new technologies to clearances and inspections for international road transport can be promoted through the exchange of experience, which may lead to greater levels of harmonization in the region.

C. Development of professional training for international road transport

As the part of the regional strategic framework, professional training of all stakeholders, including policymakers, managers and drivers for international road transport needs to be developed to ensure that they are competent to fulfil their tasks in international operations. Over the mid- to long term, it is desirable to establish national training institutions for national policymakers, managers and drivers undertaking international road transport. However, in South Asia and South-East Asia, subregional training institutions focusing on courses on subregional operations would be more helpful and effective in the short term and help overcome some of the financial and capacity constraints. In Central Asia and West Asia, which have stronger links to Europe, training for subregional operations may be undertaken in parallel with courses for interregional operations.

The ESCAP secretariat could provide assistance, defining the main subjects to be included in the curricula of training institutions, in order to promote the setting of common standards in professional training.

D. Establishment/strengthening of national facilitation coordination mechanisms

A comprehensive and integrated approach, with the involvement of relevant government ministries/agencies and the private sector, is required to address transport facilitation challenges effectively. Such collaboration is crucial to the formulation and implementation of various facilitation measures. Some countries in the ESCAP region have in place coordination mechanisms that could fulfil all of the tasks required and should be further strengthened to ensure that they are fully effective. In addition, mechanisms should be developed to promote the exchange of experiences.

E. Promotion of joint control at border crossings

Joint control at border crossings at the bilateral level, including single window clearance, single stop inspection, joint customs control, establishing priority clearance for certain kinds of goods (for example, perishable goods) on a reciprocal basis and reduction of control agencies at border crossings should be promoted in line with international standards. However, the complexity of joint controls and differences from border crossing to border crossing in the implementation of joint controls needs to be fully recognized and specific comprehensive and detailed studies and designs for each border crossing need to be undertaken before implementing joint control. In this regard, the sharing of experiences among member countries can help in ensuring optimum design in terms of infrastructure and operations.

F. Promotion of economic zones at border crossings, dry ports and logistics centres

Recent developments in free economic zones and joint free economic zones at border crossings, as well as dry ports and logistics centres, have provided

new opportunities for authorities and road transport operators to overcome many difficulties in international road transport. The potential benefits in terms of facilitating international road transport and logistics need to be exploited.

G. Further application of facilitation tools

Facilitation tools, such as the time/cost-distance methodology, can help identify impediments to international transport as well as possible remedies. They should be further expanded and promoted with the support of transport ministries and other authorities as well as transport operators. The use of facilitation tools can help refine projects and measure the benefits derived.

Resolution 68/5

Asia-Pacific Years of Action for Applications of Space Technology and the Geographic Information System for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development, 2012-2017

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recognizing the importance of regional cooperation in the areas of disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management as well as environment and development,

Convinced that applications of space technology and the Geographic Information System contribute significantly to addressing issues relating to disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management as well as environment and development,

Cognizant of the efforts to strengthen regional cooperation in the applications of space technology and the Geographic Information System, such as the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum, which was established in 1993 and has created initiatives, such as Sentinel Asia, Space Applications For Environment, and the Regional Readiness Review for Key Climate Missions, as well as the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization,

Taking note of the contributions of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) Beijing Office to the provision, for countries in the Asia-Pacific region, of all types of space-based information and services relevant to disaster management to support the full disaster management cycle,

Taking note also of the contributions of Sentinel Asia to disaster management in the Asia-Pacific region, such as by bringing together space agencies and disaster management agencies, and noting with satisfaction that the final phase of this initiative will start in 2013 with the objective of establishing a comprehensive disaster management support system,

Acknowledging the capacity-building and development activities undertaken by the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific to assist members in enhancing their knowledge of space technologies and the Geographic Information System,

Recognizing contributions made by the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific as an important initiative of ESCAP in promoting regional cooperation in space applications, in particular through its education and training network,

Mindful of the need for enhanced efforts at the national and regional levels to make practical and operational use of space technology and the Geographic Information System to support disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to address issues relating to environment and development in socially beneficial areas, such as water resource management, food security, public health, forest monitoring and biodiversity,

1. *Proclaims* the period from 2012 to 2017 the Asia-Pacific Years of Action for Applications of Space Technology and the Geographic Information System for Disaster Risk Reduction and Sustainable Development, to commence on the first day of World Space Week, 4 October 2012;

2. *Decides* that the objective of the Asia-Pacific Years of Action should be to enhance efforts at the national and regional levels to broaden and deepen the contribution of space technology and the Geographic Information System to addressing issues related to disaster risk reduction and disaster risk management as well as environment and development by increasing relevant activities at the national, subregional and regional levels;
3. *Welcomes* the proposed holding of the Intergovernmental Meeting to Prepare a Plan of Action for the Asia-Pacific Years of Action, to be hosted by a member State by the end of 2012;
4. *Encourages* all members and associate members to participate actively in the Intergovernmental Meeting and its preparatory process;
5. *Invites* United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, as well as intergovernmental, regional and subregional organizations and other stakeholders to participate in and contribute to the Intergovernmental Meeting and its preparatory process;
6. *Invites* members to make use of programmes offered by the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific for capacity-building in space technologies and the Geographic Information System;
7. *Calls for* continued support to activities under the Regional Space Applications Programme for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific in promoting space technology applications;
8. *Invites* member States to carry out activities relevant to the Asia-Pacific Years of Action, including:
 - (a) Hosting workshops in cooperation with United Nations bodies and other international/intergovernmental organizations as well as regional and subregional entities, such as the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum, the Asia-Pacific Space Cooperation Organization and the Asian Development Bank;
 - (b) Promoting initiatives such as Sentinel Asia, Space Applications For Environment, the Regional Readiness Review for Key Climate Missions, and Asia-Oceania experiments of Global Navigation Satellite Systems that include the Quasi-Zenith Satellite System;
9. *Invites* all relevant specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations system as well as intergovernmental, regional and subregional organizations and other stakeholders to take action in support of the Asia-Pacific Years of Action;
10. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to facilitate the organization of activities associated with the Asia-Pacific Years of Action in collaboration with other regional initiatives;
11. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventy-second session on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution and at its seventy-fourth session on the progress made in the attainment of the objectives of the Asia-Pacific Years of Action.

*Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012*

Resolution 68/6

Asia-Pacific regional preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling that the General Assembly, in its resolution 65/234 of 22 December 2010, decided to convene a special session during its sixty-ninth session in order to assess the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and to renew political support for actions required for the full achievement of the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action,

Also recalling that the General Assembly, in the same resolution, called upon the United Nations Population Fund to undertake an operational review of the implementation of the Programme of Action, and invited all other relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to contribute, as appropriate, to the special session as well as to its preparation,

Further recalling that the General Assembly, in the same resolution, also encouraged Governments to undertake reviews of the progress achieved and the constraints faced therein in the implementation of the Programme of Action at all levels, particularly at the national level and at the level of international cooperation,

Recalling its resolution 66/12 of 19 May 2010 on the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference, in which it requested the Executive Secretary to convene the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bangkok in 2012 in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system,

Taking note of the proposed regional preparatory activities to be undertaken by the secretariat in cooperation with the United Nations Population Fund to support members and associate members in preparing for the special session,

Mindful of the significant linkage between the International Conference on Population and Development and the Asian and Pacific Population Conference and the need to align the convening of the forthcoming sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference with the global process leading up to the special session in order to achieve synergies and impact,

1. *Decides* to postpone the convening of the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bangkok to 2013 with a view to utilizing the Conference as an intergovernmental platform for regional preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014;

2. *Also decides* that critical population and development issues, such as (a) sexual and reproductive health, including maternal health, family planning and prevention and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, (b) gender equality and women's empowerment, (c) population ageing, (d) international migration, (e) urbanization, (f) education, and (g) regional and international cooperation in the field of population and development, be considered in the work of the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference as part of the process of assessing the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and recommending actions required at all levels for the full achievement of its goals and objectives, with particular attention to accelerating the reduction of maternal mortality and

access to sexual and reproductive health information and services for all, especially for young people and vulnerable groups;

3. *Further decides* that the outcome of the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference serve as a regional input to the special session of the General Assembly on the International Conference on Population and Development beyond 2014;

4. *Emphasizes* the need for all members and associate members to recommit themselves to fully implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

5. *Also emphasizes* that financial resources should be used effectively by recipient countries to meet national population and development objectives, so as to assist donors to secure commitment to further resources for programmes;

6. *Further emphasizes* the need for complementary resource flows from the international community, including donor countries, for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

7. *Underlines* the need for national capacity-building for population and development and transfer of appropriate technology and know-how to developing countries to be core objectives and central activities for international cooperation at the programme level. It should be stressed that the international community was called on to consider such measures as the transfer of technologies to developing countries to produce and distribute high-quality items for reproductive health services in order to strengthen the self-reliance of these countries;

8. *Encourages* all members and associate members to undertake national reviews of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action and the constraints faced therein;

9. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To prepare a regional overview on the basis of the national reviews of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Programme of Action and the constraints faced therein for the consideration of the sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference;

(b) To report to the Commission at its seventy-first session on the implementation of the present resolution.

*Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012*

Resolution 68/7
Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

Recalling also previous General Assembly resolutions on the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in which the Assembly recognized the collective responsibility of Governments to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level, and stressed the duty of member States to achieve greater justice and equality for all, in particular persons with disabilities,

Recalling its resolutions 48/3 of 23 April 1992 and 58/4 of 22 May 2002, in which it proclaimed the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons from 1993 to 2002, and its extension from 2003 to 2012, as well as the establishment of the United Nations trust fund for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons,

Expressing appreciation to the members and associate members as well as to the other stakeholders in the Asian and Pacific region, including persons with disabilities, for their commitment to promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, including through their financial contribution to the aforementioned fund and other funds,

Recognizing the positive impact of previous regional decades in increasing national action on the rights of persons with disabilities, while noting that many challenges remain,

Emphasizing the importance of a participatory, comprehensive and multi-sectoral approach in order to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities effectively, especially with the active and meaningful involvement of persons with disabilities,

Acknowledging that there has been much improvement in the political, social and economic environment that has been conducive to the enhancement of the rights of persons with disabilities, and that technological advances, including information and communications technologies, have become instrumental in promoting, protecting and ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities,

Taking note of the recommendation of the Committee on Social Development at its second session that the Commission proclaim a new decade, from 2013 to 2022, to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, with a view to addressing both remaining and emerging challenges,

Reaffirming the significance of the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting on the Final Review of the Implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, to be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea in Incheon from 29 October to 2 November 2012, which will conclude the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 2003-2012, and is expected to adopt a strategic action framework for a new decade, 2013-2022,

Noting the significance of mechanisms, including national financing and international cooperation, to support the full and effective implementation of a new decade, 2013-2022,

Expressing appreciation for the proposed establishment by the Republic of Korea of a multi-donor trust fund, to be called the Make the Right Real Fund initiated by and based in the Republic of Korea and which will be founded on a public-private partnership, to support the successful implementation of a new decade, 2013-2022,

1. *Proclaims* the period from 2013 to 2022 the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, with a view to addressing both remaining and emerging challenges, promoting, protecting and ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities, increasing ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015;

2. *Urges* all members and associate members to participate actively in the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting, and to consider and adopt a strategic framework to guide the implementation of the Decade that is based on the general principles and obligations stipulated in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;

3. *Invites* all members and associate members of the Commission, international development assistance agencies and the private sector to ensure the successful implementation of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to support members and associate members upon request, including through capacity-building and technical assistance, in developing and pursuing national programmes and international cooperation during the forthcoming Decade;

5. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its sixty-ninth session, and triennially thereafter until the end of the Decade, on the progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

*Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012*

Resolution 68/8

Enhancing coordination within the United Nations system and cooperation with regional organizations for promoting regional development

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 62/208 of 19 December 2007, in which the Assembly, among other things, encouraged the United Nations development system to strengthen collaboration with regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations and regional banks, as appropriate and consistent with their respective mandates, and requested the regional commissions to further develop their analytical capacities to support country-level development initiatives at the request of the programme countries, and to support measures for more intensive inter-agency collaboration at the regional and subregional levels,

Also recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/46 of 31 July 1998 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, in which the Council reaffirmed the role of the regional commissions as regional outposts of the United Nations and called for close cooperation between the commissions and other relevant regional bodies in order to reinforce synergies and complementarities between their respective programmes of work,

Further recalling its resolution 60/1 of 28 April 2004 containing the Shanghai Declaration, in which the members and associate members emphasized the Commission's unique role as the most representative body for the Asian and Pacific region and its mandate as the main general economic and social development centre within the United Nations system for the Asian and Pacific region, and renewed their commitment to enhancing subregional and regional cooperation with a view to promoting sustainable development in the Asian and the Pacific region,

Recognizing that the regional dimension of development is critical for an effective and coordinated response to an ever growing number of regional and global issues, and that regional responses are of increasing importance as a buffer against global shocks and crises,

Emphasizing the importance of the regional and subregional levels as an essential building block of effective global governance, as they provide the critical link between the global and national levels, especially in the context of the ongoing discussions on an integrated approach to sustainable development and the development agenda beyond 2015,

Stressing the significant role played by the regional commissions as part of the institutional landscape in each region through norm setting, dissemination and analytical functions as well as operational activities that are complementary and mutually reinforcing, and as important forums for articulating regional and subregional perspectives on global issues and building consensus within each region,

Recognizing the importance of regional coordination mechanisms in promoting enhanced regional cooperation among agencies of the United Nations system and working together towards enhanced policy coherence, programme effectiveness and efficiency,

Taking note of the independent study entitled *The Regional Dimension of Development and the UN System*, sponsored by the regional commissions,

1. *Commends* the Executive Secretary and the executive secretaries of the other regional commissions for sponsoring the independent study entitled *The Regional Dimension of Development and the UN System*, and calls on her to disseminate the findings and recommendations of the study to the members and associate members of the Commission;

2. *Invites* agencies of the United Nations, as appropriate, to work together in support of the implementation of the recommendations of the independent study on regionalism as a building block for multilateralism and on the need for a coherent regional strategy for development, as annexed to the present resolution;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To work, through the Asia-Pacific Regional Coordination Mechanism and in consultation with member States and other relevant organizations operating in Asia and the Pacific at the regional and subregional levels, towards the implementation of the recommendations so that the United Nations system's engagement with such organizations is coherent and strategically coordinated, and is geared to support regional integration efforts;

(b) To report to the Commission at its sixty-ninth session on the progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

*Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012*

Annex

Recommendation 1

Regionalism as a building block for multilateralism

There is a need for the United Nations system to recognize the importance of regionalism, and its enormous potential as a building block for multilateralism. An increasingly assertive regional governance is emerging with significant implications on global governance. The rising importance of the regional dimension of development, and its critical role as a vital effective and efficient link between the global and national levels, has to be acknowledged and taken into account in all global development processes.

Recommendation 2

The need for a coherent regional strategy for development

A large number of United Nations and non-United Nations organizations, particularly the regional commissions, are working at the regional level. The value and impact of United Nations system engagement with regional organizations is best when efforts are coherent and strategically coordinated and fit into a larger comprehensive framework of collaboration with partner organizations. The United Nations system organizations working together in each region need to coordinate their interventions within an overarching collective strategy of engagement with the partner organizations and stakeholders, bearing in mind the specificities and priorities of each region. The regional commissions, the regional arms of the United Nations, with their convening power and their role as United Nations pan-regional intergovernmental platforms, have a central role to play in the development and implementation of such strategies.

Resolution 68/9

Terms of reference of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolution 67/15 on the midterm review of the functioning of the conference structure of the Commission, in which it decided to explore ways to strengthen the role of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission, and entrusted that task to the Advisory Committee, as well as the task of reviewing the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee,

Having considered the report of the Advisory Committee,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Advisory Committee;
2. *Adopts* the terms of reference of the Advisory Committee as annexed to the present resolution.

*Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012*

Annex

Terms of reference of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission

The Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission shall have the following functions:

- (a) To strengthen close cooperation and consultation between the member States and the secretariat, including by providing advice and guidance to be taken into account by the Executive Secretary while undertaking the respective activities;
- (b) To serve as a deliberative forum for substantive exchange of views and provide guidance on the formulation of the ESCAP agenda and in connection with economic and social developments that have an impact on the Asia-Pacific region;
- (c) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary in drawing up proposals for the strategic framework, programme of work and theme topics for Commission sessions consistent with the guidance provided by the Commission;
- (d) To receive, on a regular basis, information on the administrative and financial functioning of the Commission;
- (e) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Commission's programme of work and resource allocation;
- (f) To review the draft calendar of meetings prior to its submission to the Commission at its annual session;
- (g) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary on the provisional agenda for sessions of the Commission and committees subsidiary to the Commission, consistent with the need to ensure a results-oriented and focused agenda that is aligned with the developmental priorities of member States, as defined by them, as well as chapter II of its rules of procedure;

(h) To advise and guide the Executive Secretary on the identification of emerging economic and social issues and other relevant issues for incorporation into the provisional agendas and on the formulation of the annotated provisional agendas for Commission sessions;

(i) To be informed of ESCAP collaboration and related arrangements with other international and regional organizations, in particular on long-term cooperation programmes and joint initiatives, including those to be proposed by the Executive Secretary and conducted under the aegis of the Regional Coordination Mechanism;

(j) To carry out any other tasks entrusted to it by the Commission.

Resolution 68/10

Enhancing regional economic integration in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Reaffirming its unique role as the most representative body for the Asian and Pacific region and its comprehensive mandate as the main general economic and social development centre within the United Nations system for the Asian and Pacific region,

Recalling the First Ministerial Conference on Asian Economic Cooperation, which was held in Manila in 1963 under the auspices of the Commission and gave rise to the establishment of the Asian Development Bank,

Also recalling other important contributions of the Commission to regional economic integration and cooperation as reflected in the establishment of the Mekong River Commission, the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement, the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway, the ESCAP/WMO Typhoon Committee, the WMO/ESCAP Panel on Tropical Cyclones and the Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Tsunami, Disaster and Climate Preparedness in Indian Ocean and Southeast Asian Countries,

Further recalling its resolutions 63/7 on international migration and development for least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, 65/1 on the implementation of the Bali Outcome Document in addressing the food, fuel and financial crises, 66/4 on the implementation of the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia, 66/5 on the implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific, and 67/2 on promoting regional cooperation for enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy in Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling the theme topic for the sixty-eighth session “Enhancing regional economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region”,

Noting the theme study for the sixty-eighth session, entitled *Growing Together: Economic Integration for an Inclusive and Sustainable Asia-Pacific Century*,

Recognizing that the rapid economic growth in Asia and the Pacific is opening up significant opportunities for trade, investment and employment and has the potential to facilitate substantive progress in reducing poverty and closing development gaps across countries in the region,

Emphasizing the need for closer regional cooperation, which could make the region more resilient to future crises and bolster the capacity of countries in the region to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,

Also emphasizing that, in the wake of the global financial crisis, regional economic integration could play a critical role in driving the Asian and Pacific region’s march to an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future,

Further emphasizing the need to substantially enhance the degree of connectivity in the region, including through investment in physical transport, energy and information and communications technology infrastructure, and improvements in trade and transport facilitation,

Emphasizing that cooperation among countries in the region is critical in order to tackle common risks and vulnerabilities, such as those related to food and energy insecurity, disasters and pressures on natural resources,

Noting that current institutional frameworks for economic integration differ in their membership and scope,

1. *Calls upon* all members and associate members to strengthen the role of the Commission in enhancing regional economic integration and cooperation, including in all subregions of Asia and the Pacific;

2. *Decides* to convene the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Integration in 2013, marking the fiftieth anniversary of the First Ministerial Conference on Asian Economic Cooperation, to review the theme study for the sixty-eighth session of the Commission;

3. *Calls upon* all members and associate members to further promote regional economic integration and cooperation and to formulate and implement coherent policies to increase the effectiveness of existing cooperation mechanisms;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To strengthen the role and capacity of the secretariat in the area of regional economic integration in the Asia-Pacific region;

(b) To support the convening of the First Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Integration in 2013;

(c) To report to the Commission at its seventieth session on the progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

*Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012*

Resolution 68/11
Connectivity for energy security

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recalling its resolution 67/2 on promoting regional cooperation for enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy in Asia and the Pacific,

Taking note of the Secretary-General's initiative "Sustainable Energy for All",

Recalling General Assembly resolution 65/151, in which the Assembly decided to declare 2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All,

Recognizing the need to optimize the use of energy resources by analysing the potential to address that need with a view to establishing and developing a more stable and efficient energy production and consumption system that contributes towards sustainable development and enhanced energy security,

Taking note of the theme study for the sixty-eighth session of the Commission,

Welcoming the ongoing efforts of Governments to promote subregional and regional cooperation on the interconnection of energy transmission systems,

1. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to identify options, in consultation with member States, that member States may choose on regional energy connectivity, including an intergovernmental framework that could be developed for an integrated regional power grid, which could be termed as the "Asian Energy Highway", to analyse the socioeconomic and environmental benefits of each option as well as the challenges and opportunities towards the realization of each option, and to report on each option to the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, which will be held in the Russian Federation in May 2013;

2. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its seventieth session on the progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

Fifth plenary meeting
23 May 2012

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