

ECOSOC Resolution 2005/35

Midterm review concerning the functioning of the conference structure of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific resolutions 143 (XXX) of 5 April 1974, 210 (XXXVI) of 29 March 1980, 262 (XLIII) of 30 April 1987, 47/3 of 10 April 1991, 48/2 of 23 April 1992, 51/3 of 1 May 1995 and 53/1 of 30 April 1997 on the conference structure of the Commission,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 50/227 of 24 May 1996 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985 on the pattern of conferences, in which the Assembly decided that United Nations bodies may hold sessions away from their established headquarters when a Government issuing an invitation for a session to be held within its territory has agreed to defray, after consultation with the Secretary-General as to their nature and possible extent, the actual additional costs directly or indirectly involved,

Recalling Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific resolution 58/1 of 22 May 2002 on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission, in particular paragraph 6 thereof on a midterm review to be conducted during the sixty-first session,

Recalling also Commission resolution 60/6 of 28 April 2004 on the revitalization of the United Nations ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre, in particular paragraphs 1 and 2 thereof regarding the terms of reference of the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries and the establishment of an Advisory Council for the Centre,

Recalling further Commission resolution 60/5 of 28 April 2004 on the Centre for Alleviation of Poverty through Secondary Crops Development in Asia and the Pacific, by which it revised the statute of the Regional Coordination Centre for Research and Development of Coarse Grains, Pulses, Roots and Tuber Crops in the Humid Tropics of Asia and the Pacific and changed the name of the Centre,

Taking into account Commission resolutions 61/2 of 18 May 2005 on the statute of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, 61/3 of 18 May 2005 on the statute of the United Nations Asian and Pacific Centre for Agricultural Engineering and Machinery, 61/4 of 18 May 2005 on the statute of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology, in which it revised the statutes of the respective regional institutions, and resolution 61/6 of 18 May 2005 on the establishment of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development as a follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society (all of the above-mentioned institutions being collectively referred to hereunder as “the regional institutions”),

Recognizing that a complete meeting cycle of the thirteen subsidiary bodies of the Commission was concluded at the end of 2004, which makes it possible at the current session of the Commission to review the efficiency and effectiveness of the new conference structure established in accordance with Commission resolution 58/1, while bearing in mind that the new conference structure came into effect only in 2003,

Recognizing also the need for the reporting process under the conference structure to be more streamlined so that the Commission can take timely action on the reports of its subsidiary bodies,

Taking note of the evaluations and recommendations of members and associate members concerning the outcomes of sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies held under the new conference structure, which provide a useful basis for the midterm review,

Reiterating its support for keeping the work of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific focused on three key thematic areas, poverty reduction, managing globalization and addressing emerging social issues,

Aware of the need for the conference structure to be kept in line with the process of overall reform of the United Nations,

1. *Notes with appreciation* that, since the adoption of Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific resolution 58/1 on 22 May 2002, a new conference structure has been established in accordance with the pattern set out in paragraph 1 of that resolution;

2. *Commends* the Executive Secretary of the Commission for his efforts to prepare and organize the conferences and meetings under the new structure in an effective and efficient way and to make them correspond more fully to the three key thematic areas, poverty reduction, managing globalization and addressing emerging social issues;

3. *Also commends* the Executive Secretary for having completed the reorganization of the secretariat as requested in paragraph 2 of Commission resolution 58/1;

4. *Decides* that, as a result of the midterm review of the functioning of the conference structure, the following points should override or be integrated into the present pattern of its conference structure, as prescribed in paragraph 1 of Commission resolution 58/1 and, where relevant, the respective terms of reference annexed to the resolution:

(a) Subsidiary structure

The thematic committees shall be retained to keep the work of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific focused on three key thematic areas: poverty reduction; managing globalization; and addressing emerging social issues. The work of the subcommittees shall be subsumed under the respective thematic committees beginning in 2006, as a means of strengthening their integration within their respective thematic contexts;

To ensure that the key sectoral issues formerly dealt with by the subcommittees can be addressed more effectively within a thematic framework, the format of the sessions of the thematic committees shall include segments as follows:

(i) Committee on Poverty Reduction: Poverty reduction practices and statistics;

(ii) Committee on Managing Globalization:

Part I: International trade and investment, and transport infrastructure and facilitation and tourism;

Part II: Information, communication and space technology, and environment and sustainable development;

(iii) Committee on Emerging Social Issues: socially vulnerable groups, and health and development;

To ensure timely review of emerging issues as well as reporting to the Commission, the thematic committees, including parts I and II of the Committee on Managing Globalization, shall meet separately and annually after the session of the Commission for a maximum duration of five days for each session, with the duration depending on the agenda of the committee in question;

The segments under three of the above committees shall be convened either consecutively or simultaneously. The segments under one of the above committees shall be convened consecutively. The secretariat will provide interpretation services in the working languages of the Commission;

(b) Special bodies

The Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries shall hold its sessions prior to the sessions of the Commission, in alternate years with the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries. The maximum duration of the sessions of each of the special bodies will be two days;

The Advisory Council of the United Nations ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre, comprising representatives of the Governments of Pacific island developing countries and territories, and also of Australia and New Zealand, shall meet biennially for a maximum duration of one day at the venue of the relevant session of the Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries to provide advice on the Centre's work programme priorities;

(c) Regional institutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

The regional institutions of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific shall continue to function under the terms of reference stipulated in the relevant resolutions, namely, resolutions 60/5, 61/2, 61/3, 61/4 and 61/6;

The programmes of work of the regional institutions shall be aligned with the thematic priorities of the Commission under the strategic framework;

5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to ensure that the thematic sessions of the committees are conducted in a results-oriented manner that yields concrete outcomes aimed at strengthening the focus and impact of the work of the Commission;

6. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary, in accordance with paragraph 6 of Commission resolution 58/1, to report to the Commission at subsequent sessions on the implementation of the present resolution, focusing in particular on whether the conference structure has served the purpose of improving efficiency and attracting higher and wider representation from members and associate members, which would serve in particular as the basis for the comprehensive review to be conducted during the sixty-third session concerning the functioning of the conference structure;

7. *Decides* to review the conference structure of the Commission, including its thematic and sectoral priorities and subsidiary structure, and to consider the possibility of further revising its structure at its sixty-third session.

*39th plenary meeting
26 July 2005*