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## Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Committee on Energy

### First session

Bangkok, 17-19 January 2017

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

### Review of the work of the Committee

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### Note by the secretariat\*\*

#### *Summary*

Resolution 71/1 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda, covers the scope of work and issues to be addressed by the Committee on Energy. The Committee is invited to review and provide recommendations on possible alignment and adjustment of its list of issues to be addressed. Moreover, the Committee may wish to discuss and provide specific guidance on the priority areas of its work and that of its Bureau and make recommendations on the possible structural options for the Committee in order to ensure the timely and effective delivery of the work programme on energy.

## I. Background

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific adopted its new conference structure through its resolution 71/1, on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda.
2. The Commission established that its subsidiary structure would consist of nine committees, including the newly established Committee on Energy. Paragraphs 3 to 8 below describe the provisions of the conference structure of the Commission that are relevant to the Committee.
3. The Committee on Energy will meet biennially for a maximum duration of three days for each session, with joint plenary sessions between multiple committees to discuss cross-cutting issues, when possible and desirable. The Commission may mandate the Committee to meet in the gap year to address urgent regional issues.

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\* E/ESCAP/CE(1)/L.1.

\*\* This note was submitted late owing to the extensive research and internal consultation that was necessary.

4. The Commission also decided that, within its area of purview, the Committee would:

- (a) Review and analyse regional trends;
- (b) Identify, in consultation with member States, its priorities and emerging issues, and consult on regional approaches, taking into consideration subregional aspects;
- (c) Promote regional dialogue, including subregional synergies, and an exchange of experiences on policies and programmes;
- (d) Consider common regional positions as inputs to global processes and promote regional follow-up to their outcomes;
- (e) Propose issues for consideration by the Commission as the basis for possible resolutions;
- (f) Monitor the implementation of Commission resolutions;
- (g) Promote a collaborative approach to addressing the development challenges of the region, where appropriate, between Governments and civil society, the private sector, as well as the United Nations and other international organizations at the regional and subregional levels.

5. Further, within its area of purview, the Committee will provide the secretariat, including its regional institutions, with guidance in reviewing the proposed strategic framework and programme of work.

6. The following areas will be mainstreamed into the work of all committees:

- (a) Implementation and monitoring the achievement of the relevant internationally agreed development goals;
- (b) Poverty reduction and balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development;
- (c) Gender equality;
- (d) The priority needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.

7. Representatives of civil society and the private sector may, upon consultation with member States, be invited to join the Committee sessions as appropriate, in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Commission.

8. Subject to the approval of the Commission, ad hoc ministerial conferences and other intergovernmental meetings may be organized on energy and/or cross-sectoral issues. Such a ministerial conference on energy, the first Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, was held in May 2013 in Vladivostok, Russian Federation. By its resolution 70/9 on implementation of the outcomes of the first Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, the Commission decided to convene the second Forum at the ministerial level in 2018.

## **II. List of issues to be addressed by the Committee**

9. The list of primary issues to be addressed by the Committee is included in annex II to Commission resolution 71/1. Since the adoption of the resolution in May 2015, several global and regional mandates related to energy, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement, have been agreed globally by Member States of the United Nations. The Commission may review and adjust the list of issues for the

Committee as appropriate and the Committee likewise has the flexibility to address new or emerging issues brought to its attention by the secretariat, upon consultation with member States.

10. The primary issues to be addressed by the Committee, as listed in annex II to Commission resolution 71/1, are to:

(a) Assist in the development of strategies towards attaining internationally agreed development goals concerning energy;

(b) Promote policy dialogues and networking among member States to develop a regional cooperation framework to enhance energy security, with a view towards promoting greater use of sustainable energy resources, including universal access to energy services, improving energy efficiency and scaling up the use of renewable energy, particularly through data and policy analysis, information exchanges and best practices;

(c) Identify policy options to strengthen intergovernmental frameworks to promote regional energy connectivity in order to develop a supportive mechanism for regional economic cooperation and integration;

(d) Support the implementation of the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum and other regional agreements and mandates including the evolving post-2015 development agenda, promoted by the Commission for regional cooperation for enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy;

(e) Identify policy options, strategies, policy dialogues and knowledge platforms to promote access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, including renewable energy, energy efficiency, and advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies;

(f) Identify policies and strategies to promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technologies.

11. In order to facilitate the Committee's discussions on prioritizing its list of issues to be addressed, the annex to the present note contains a list of General Assembly resolutions relevant to energy that have been adopted over the past several years, followed by a list of Commission resolutions specifically related to energy.

12. The Committee is invited to review and provide guidance on prioritizing its list of issues to be addressed.

### **III. Review of the work of the Committee**

13. The Committee may wish to discuss and provide specific guidance on its work and the governance structure of the energy programme, and make recommendations on the possible structural options for the Committee. The paragraphs below are intended as a basis for discussions; they do not necessarily represent the position of any member State and do not prejudice the conclusions and recommendations that the Committee will make on the matter.

14. In order to ensure the timely and effective delivery of the work programme on energy during Committee sessions and intersessional periods, the Bureau could play an active role in preparations for the sessions and intersessional periods with the assistance of the secretariat.

15. The Bureau of the Committee is composed of the Chair, five Vice-Chairs (preferably, but not necessarily, one from each ESCAP subregion) and

one Rapporteur. The Bureau will be elected by member States at each session of the Committee.

16. The Bureau may hold consultations in person in conjunction with other meetings organized by the secretariat or by video/telephone conference. In principle, the Bureau will hold consultations at least twice a year. The Bureau will represent the Committee, through its Chair or other such Bureau member as may be designated by the Chair, at meetings, workshops or other forums for which invitations might be received and which the Bureau considers of particular relevance and importance to the Committee. The Bureau will report to the Committee at its subsequent session on its activities and the progress made in the intersessional period.

17. With a view to benefiting from expertise and advice within its area of purview, the Committee may consider establishing expert advisory groups comprising leading energy experts nominated by member States.

18. The expert advisory groups<sup>1</sup> would provide strategic and expert advice, identify and share best practices and recommended policies, and assist in developing and applying analytical tools. Subject to availability of funding, the secretariat will organize workshops and training with the participation of the expert advisory group members.

#### **IV. Issues for consideration by the Committee**

19. The Committee is invited to review and provide recommendations on possible alignment and adjustment of its list of issues to be addressed.

20. The Committee may wish to discuss and provide specific guidance on the priority areas of its work and that of its Bureau and make recommendations on the possible structural options for the Committee in order to ensure the timely and effective delivery of the work programme on energy.

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<sup>1</sup> The closest analogy to the proposed expert advisory groups is that of the six Groups of Experts serving as subsidiary bodies to the Committee on Sustainable Energy in the intergovernmental structure of the Economic Commission for Europe: the Group of Experts on Energy Efficiency, the Group of Experts on Cleaner Electricity Production from Fossil Fuels, the Group of Experts on Renewable Energy, the Group of Experts on Coal Mine Methane, the Expert Group on Resource Classification and the Group of Experts on Gas. For more information regarding the functioning of the Committee on the Sustainable Energy, see [www.unece.org/energy/se/com](http://www.unece.org/energy/se/com).

## Annex

### **New and existing global and regional United Nations resolutions relevant to energy**

1. General Assembly resolution 65/151 on the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, in which the General Assembly decided to declare 2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All.
2. General Assembly resolution 67/215 on promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, in which the General Assembly decided to declare 2014-2024 the United Nations Decade of Sustainable Energy for All.
3. General Assembly resolution 70/1, “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, in which the General Assembly adopted, among others, Sustainable Development Goal 7 (Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all) and its targets and means of implementation:
  - (a) 7.1: By 2030, ensure universal access to affordable, reliable and modern energy services;
  - (b) 7.2: By 2030, increase substantially the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix;
  - (c) 7.3: By 2030, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency;
  - (d) 7.a: By 2030, enhance international cooperation to facilitate access to clean energy research and technology, including renewable energy, energy efficiency and advanced and cleaner fossil-fuel technology, and promote investment in energy infrastructure and clean energy technology;
  - (e) 7.b: By 2030, expand infrastructure and upgrade technology for supplying modern and sustainable energy services for all in developing countries, in particular least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their respective programmes of support.
4. Resolution 67/2 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) on promoting regional cooperation for enhanced energy security and the sustainable use of energy in Asia and the Pacific, in which the Commission requested the Executive Secretary:
  - (a) To strengthen the role and capacity of the ESCAP secretariat in the area of energy security;
  - (b) To convene, in 2013, the Asian and Pacific Energy Forum at the ministerial level to discuss the progress achieved in the Asia-Pacific region in addressing the energy security challenges at the regional, national and household levels, and to facilitate continuous dialogue among member States with a view to enhancing energy security and working towards sustainable development.
5. Commission resolution 68/11 on connectivity for energy security, in which the Commission requested the Executive Secretary to identify options, in consultation with member States, that member States could 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 would be held in the Russian Federation in May 2013.

6. Commission resolution 70/9 on implementation of the outcomes of the first Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, in which the Commission decided to convene the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum at the ministerial level in 2018 and requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To accord priority to the implementation of the outcomes of the first Asian and Pacific Energy Forum, namely the Ministerial Declaration on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific: Shaping the Future of Sustainable Energy in Asia and the Pacific, and the Plan of Action on Regional Cooperation for Enhanced Energy Security and the Sustainable Use of Energy in Asia and the Pacific, 2014-2018;

(b) To undertake a periodic review of the progress made in the implementation of the Plan of Action based on information provided on a voluntary basis by members and associate members, as well as by collaborating international organizations;

(c) To begin the necessary preparatory work for the second Asian and Pacific Energy Forum in a timely manner, including consultations with the Government of Tonga regarding the hosting of the meeting.

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