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Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Committee on Statistics

Eighth session

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Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda**

Reports brought to the attention of the Committee: report of the Bureau

Terms of reference of the Bureau of the Committee on Statistics

Note by the secretariat

1. The Bureau was established by the Committee on Statistics at its first session, in 2009, to assist the Committee, without prejudice to other committees of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Also at its first session, the Committee endorsed the terms of reference of the Bureau (see E/ESCAP/CST/10, sect. I.B.1, decision 1/1).
2. The introduction of hybrid attendance modalities (online and in-person) for the seventh session of the Committee, as well as the need to clarify the Committee's decision-making procedures during intersessional periods, prompted the Bureau to request a review of its terms of reference.
3. In response to the Bureau's request, the ESCAP secretariat amended the terms of reference and shared them by email with Committee members in September 2021. Comments on the amended text were received from China, India, Japan and the Republic of Korea. The suggested amendments were incorporated into the text.
4. The Committee may wish to review and endorse the revised terms of reference of the Bureau annexed to the present document.

* Reissued for technical reasons on 18 August 2022.

** ESCAP/CST/2022/L.1/Rev.1.

Annex

Terms of reference of the Bureau of the Committee on Statistics

I. Composition

1. To assist the Committee on Statistics in performing its functions over the period between each formal session, the members of the Bureau shall be elected at each formal session of the Committee.¹

2. The elected Chair of the Committee will serve as the Chair of the Bureau. There will be three Vice-Chairs and up to three other members, one of whom will act as the Rapporteur for the Committee's formal sessions. The Bureau will be elected at each formal session of the Committee with due consideration given to geographic representation. As considered appropriate by the Chair, others may, depending on the specific activities of the Bureau, be invited to participate in those activities from time to time. All members of the Bureau are eligible for re-election for a maximum of two terms.²

II. Role

3. The Bureau will assist the Committee in carrying out its functions during the intersessional period, including overseeing the activities of the Statistics Division of ESCAP related to the implementation of the decisions of the Committee.

4. The Bureau will represent the Committee, through its Chair or such other Bureau member as may be designated by the Chair, at meetings, workshops or other forums for which invitations might be received and that the Bureau considers of relevance and importance to the Committee.

5. The Bureau will consider presentations by the ESCAP secretariat on the agendas, resolutions, decisions and other documents of ESCAP and the Statistical Commission, as well as their subsidiary bodies and other relevant forums whose work is relevant to that of the Committee, and will highlight issues of particular importance for the region for the consideration of the Committee, making appropriate recommendations within the mandate of the Bureau.

6. The Bureau will guide the ESCAP secretariat in the development of the provisional agenda and the scope of documentation for each Committee session.

7. The Bureau will make recommendations to the Committee to establish working groups, task forces or any other instruments as are deemed necessary in furtherance of the functions of the Committee and implement its decisions through the secretariat.

¹ For information on the principles and procedures concerning the election of the Bureau, see E/ESCAP/CST(2)/1.

² E/ESCAP/CST(2)/1, para. 3 (a).

8. The Bureau will regularly keep the Committee informed of all significant steps taken and proposed by the Bureau and, in the event of objections or differences, resolve matters through electronic communication. The Bureau shall submit a report on its work to the Committee at each of its sessions. The report will be supplemented by an oral report of the Chair.

III. Functioning

9. The Bureau shall hold consultations periodically, as needed, during the intersessional period.

10. The functioning of the Bureau will have no budget implications for ESCAP.

11. The Bureau will pursue the following in the intersessional period so that it may effectively perform the role outlined in section II above:

(a) Engage with, and provide technical support to, the other eight committees of ESCAP³ on any statistical matters that may arise in the course of their work;

(b) Propose common regional positions to the Committee regarding the formulation, review and extension of international statistical frameworks, classifications and standards, and on the setting of statistical priorities in the work programme of the Statistical Commission;

(c) Review and analyse progress in the development of statistics in Asia and the Pacific, paying particular attention to the specific tasks set from time to time by the Statistical Commission and to the implementation of international statistical frameworks, classifications and standards;

(d) Provide the secretariat with guidance on coordination and collaboration with relevant regional and subregional entities and other entities of the United Nations system and other international organizations concerning statistical work in Asia and the Pacific;

(e) Promote the observance of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/261;

(f) Identify, within the strategic framework and the programme of work, areas for technical assistance, training, education and research in the area of statistics and their application, including the development of information technology applications and information resource management in Asia and the Pacific;

(g) Make suggestions to the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on the nature of, and priorities in, statistical training for countries of the region, including countries with special needs.

³ The committees of ESCAP are: (a) the Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development; (b) the Committee on Trade, Investment, Enterprise and Business Innovation; (c) the Committee on Transport; (d) the Committee on Environment and Development; (e) the Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation; (f) the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction; (g) the Committee on Social Development; (h) the Committee on Statistics; (i) and the Committee on Energy.