ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

ANNUAL REPORT 22 May 2020 – 29 April 2021

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS, 2021

SUPPLEMENT No. 19



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Sales No.:	E.21.II.F.8		
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ISBN:	978-92-1-120826-9		
eISBN:	978-92-1-403087-4		
print ISSN:	2411-9040		
online ISSN:	2411-9067		
Symbol:	E/2021/39-ESCAP/77/28		

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List of abbreviations

APCICT	Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development
APDIM	Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management
APCTT	Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology
APTA	Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement
CSAM	Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
NEASPEC	North-East Asian Subregional Programme for Environmental Cooperation
SIAP	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

Notes: Values are in United States dollars unless specified otherwise. The term "billion" signifies a thousand million.

Introduction

1. The seventy-seventh session of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) was held in Bangkok and online from 26 to 29 April 2021 owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. The present report covers the period from 22 May 2020 to 29 April 2021 and contains the conclusions reached by the Commission. The account of proceedings of the session is contained in a separate document (ESCAP/77/29).

Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

2. At its seventy-seventh session, the Commission adopted one resolution and 14 decisions, which are reproduced below. The resolution is brought to the attention of the Council.

A. Resolution adopted by the Commission at its seventy-seventh session

Resolution 77/1

Building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific

The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,

Recognizing that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is one of the greatest global challenges in the history of the United Nations, that it has triggered an unprecedented global health, social and economic crisis, hampering progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development¹ and that recovery from the COVID-19 crisis provides an opportunity to build back better in Asia and the Pacific, including through multilateral and international cooperation at all levels,

Reaffirming its commitment to the spirit of unity, solidarity and multilateral cooperation, and expressing its commitment to international cooperation and multilateralism and its strong support for the central role of the United Nations system, including the World Health Organization, and resolving to pursue coordinated actions to effectively respond to global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic and their consequences, and, in this regard, recalling General Assembly resolution 74/274 of 20 April 2020 on international cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19, resolution 74/306 of 11 September 2020 on a comprehensive and coordinated response to the COVID-19 pandemic, resolution 74/307 of 11 September 2020, entitled "United response against global health threats: combating COVID-19", and resolution 75/130 of 14 December 2020, entitled "Global health and foreign policy: strengthening health system resilience through affordable health care for all", and World Health Assembly resolution 73.1 of 19 May 2020 on the global COVID-19 response,

Recognizing the role of extensive immunization against COVID-19 as a global public good for health in preventing, containing and stopping transmission in order to bring the pandemic to an end, and underlining the need to ensure universal and equitable access to safe, quality, efficacious, effective and affordable vaccines,

Recalling resolution 76/2 of 21 May 2020 of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on regional cooperation to address the socioeconomic effects of pandemics and crises in Asia and the Pacific and Commission

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

resolution 75/3 of 31 May 2019 on advancing partnerships within and across regions for the sustainable development of Asia and the Pacific,

Reaffirming the political declaration of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage, entitled "Universal health coverage: moving together to build a healthier world",² and recognizing the importance of nationally determined appropriate spending targets for quality investments in public health services,

Recalling the Bangkok Principles for the implementation of the health aspects of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 as a contribution to the Sendai Framework to build resilient health systems, with a view to ensuring more systematic cooperation, coherence and integration between disaster and health risk management,

Reiterating the importance of investing in inclusive national social protection systems that promote access to essential services, resources, human capital development and decent jobs, and welcoming the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific³ and its contributions to the prevention of poverty and vulnerability,

Acknowledging the need for persistent efforts to address the economic crisis and depression, begin economic recovery and minimize the negative effects on livelihoods, and recognizing that the pandemic has demonstrated the importance of ensuring the continued flow of essential goods and services and the movement of people, in accordance with appropriate public health recommendations, and the catalytic role that digital technologies can play in reducing the impact of the pandemic on economies and people's well-being,

Recognizing the importance of advancing connectivity for sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific and that the pandemic has demonstrated the importance of promoting regional connectivity,

Reaffirming the commitment to international cooperation in the creative economy which contributes to the achievement of the three dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and recalling General Assembly resolution 74/198 of 19 December 2019 on the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development, 2021,

Acknowledging that micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises and the tourism and creative sectors in the region have been severely hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, hindering the achievement of sustainable development, and encouraging members and associate members of the Commission to take measures and strengthen cooperation to facilitate recovery and build resilience,

Highlighting that the COVID-19 pandemic represents an urgent call to strengthen multilateral cooperation, recognizing, in this regard, the value of an integrated One Health approach that fosters cooperation between human health, animal health and plant health, as well as environmental and other relevant sectors, in close collaboration in particular with the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Organization for Animal Health and the United Nations Environment Programme, emphasizing the links between a healthy environment, resilient human societies and sustainable economies, and recognizing the potential benefits for countries to transform their economies to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns,

Noting with concern that the pandemic and related global economic and commodity price shocks could significantly increase the number of countries in or at risk of debt distress, and deeply concerned about the impact of high debt levels on

² General Assembly resolution 74/2.

³ ESCAP/CSD/2020/3, annex III.

countries' abilities to withstand the impact of the COVID-19 shock and to invest in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Recognizing the important role of major groups and other stakeholders, especially health workers and other front-line and essential workers and volunteers, as well as the academic and scientific community and the private sector, in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences,

Recognizing also the importance of international cooperation at all levels, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, bearing in mind that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation, in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and reaffirming the role of the regional commissions in supporting North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives in harnessing the human and other resources of the relevant knowledge networks, partnerships, and technical and research capacity by exchanging experiences on best practices on relevant issues including the COVID-19 pandemic,

Recognizing further the importance of the environmental dimension of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in particular the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change⁴ and that countries may seek to apply a climate- and environment-responsive approach to building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic,

Affirming that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve sustainable development, inter alia, such as bioeconomy, circular economy and green economy,

Taking note of the theme study for the seventy-seventh session of the Commission,⁵ in which the secretariat presents research on building back better to put the region on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to build resilience to future pandemics and similar wide-scale crises,

1. *Calls upon* members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to put in place a whole-of-government and whole-of-society response to the COVID-19 pandemic, outlining both immediate and long-term actions and recognizing that the COVID-19 pandemic has a disproportionately heavy impact on women and girls, persons with disabilities, older persons, youth and children, as well as the poor, vulnerable and marginalized segments of the population, with a view to sustainably strengthening their health systems and social care and support systems, and preparedness and response capacities, engaging with communities and collaborating with relevant stakeholders;

2. *Emphasizes* the key leadership role of the World Health Organization and the fundamental role of the United Nations system in catalysing and coordinating the comprehensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic for the international community, ensuring universal and equitable distribution of vaccines and their accessibility and affordability, particularly in developing countries and least developed countries, and the role of extensive immunization as a global public good;

3. *Encourages* members and associate members to strengthen health resilience, including by accelerating efforts towards the achievement of universal health coverage by 2030, enabling people to access affordable and quality healthcare, to ensure healthy lives, and promoting well-being for all throughout the life course as well as by enhancing the health aspects of disaster risk reduction and response to health crises, while taking note of the International Health Regulations (2005)⁶ and the

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

⁵ ESCAP/77/1.

⁶ World Health Assembly resolution 58.3.

Bangkok Principles for the implementation of the health aspects of the Sendai Framework and other relevant initiatives, as appropriate;

4. *Calls upon* members and associate members to promote multilateral and international cooperation and the international trading systems, including multilateral trading systems with the World Trade Organization at their core, as well as regional, bilateral and other trading systems;

5. Also calls upon members and associate members to take measures to ensure a sustained socioeconomic recovery, and, where applicable, locally driven development approaches, supporting resilient, inclusive and sustainable development in support of the goals and objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

6. *Calls upon* member States, who have the primary responsibility to counter discrimination and hate speech, and all relevant actors, including political and religious leaders, to promote inclusion and unity in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to strongly condemn hate speech and prevent, speak out and take strong action against racism, intolerance, xenophobia, violence and discrimination, in all its forms;

7. *Encourages* all member States to cooperate in closing connectivity gaps, strengthening digital connectivity, and promoting the digital economy, sustainable and disaster resilient infrastructure and investment, and to enhance regional supply chain connectivity and diversification, as well as to facilitate recovery and to ensure resilient connectivity during crises;

8. *Calls upon* member States to leverage digital technologies for the response to COVID-19, including for addressing its socioeconomic impact, paying particular attention to digital inclusion, patient empowerment, data privacy and security, legal and ethical issues, and the protection of personal data;

9. *Encourages* members and associate members to adopt a climate- and environment-responsive approach to COVID-19 recovery efforts and policies in support of the goals and objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, recognizing the need to immediately curb greenhouse gas emissions and achieve sustainable consumption and production patterns in line with applicable State commitments to the Paris Agreement⁷ and aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic;

10. Also encourages members and associate members to leverage the regional platform to facilitate North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives, including by promoting exchanges of good practices, knowledge and experiences, enhancing greater voluntary access to information and innovation on mutually agreed terms, and aligning available resources with the needs between providers and users of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives, and calls upon donors to intensify their efforts to fulfil their respective official development assistance commitments;

11. *Welcomes* the steps taken by the Group of 20 and the Paris Club to provide a time-bound suspension of debt service payments for the poorest countries and by international financial institutions to provide liquidity and other support measures to ease the debt burden of developing countries, and encourages all relevant actors, including private and commercial creditors, to address risks of debt vulnerabilities, through existing channels, in developing countries due to the pandemic;

⁷ See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

12. *Calls upon* member States to design recovery strategies based on risk-informed, sustainable financing policies, supported by integrated national financing frameworks as per the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,⁸ to reprioritize the policies necessary to address the economic crisis and depression, begin economic recovery and minimize the negative effects on livelihoods, including the consideration of targeted measures for poverty eradication, social protection for workers, increased access to finance and capacity-building for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, financial inclusion mechanisms, strong fiscal stimulus packages and supportive monetary policies, and calls upon donors and other stakeholders to support countries that lack the capacity to implement such measures, in particular least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as low- and middle-income countries;

13. *Invites* members and associate members to share experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with regard to building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic through inclusive, resilient and sustainable recovery strategies and investments aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

14. *Encourages* member States to work regionally and interregionally with the view to build back better, aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and with the support of the Executive Secretary, as appropriate, and in cooperation with other concerned United Nations bodies and relevant stakeholders by, inter alia:

(a) Promoting discussions on the implementation of the health aspects of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,⁹ including by taking note of the Bangkok Principles for the implementation of the health aspects of the Sendai Framework and other relevant regional and subregional frameworks and initiatives, by convening a thematic meeting in conjunction with the seventh session of the Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction and reporting on its outcomes at that session of the Committee, with a view to strengthening post-COVID-19 resilience and disaster preparedness in the region;

(b) Promoting COVID-19 recovery strategies and policies at the national level in support of the goals and objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, inter alia, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, as appropriate, including by harnessing the benefits of the different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, as appropriate, in line with national circumstances and priorities, as well as by sharing experiences, best practices and locally driven development approaches;

(c) Further enhancing national social protection systems, including through the implementation of the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific;

(d) Furthering regional cooperation on trade and investment, tourism and creative economy, connectivity and energy and promoting the digital economy, including through the Commission's regional cooperation mechanisms, frameworks and agreements;

(e) Enabling all countries to have universal, equitable, timely access to quality, safe, efficacious and affordable diagnosis, therapeutics, medicines, vaccines and essential health technologies, and their components, as well as equipment, for the COVID-19 response;

⁸ General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

⁹ General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II.

15. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to assist member States, upon request, in further enhancing national social protection systems, including through the implementation of the Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific;

16. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to facilitate the implementation of the present resolution and to report to the Commission at its seventy-eighth session on progress thereon.

7th plenary meeting 29 April 2021

B. Decisions adopted by the Commission at its seventy-seventh session

Decision 1

Enhancing regional cooperation for seamless trade and transport connectivity in times of pandemic

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission took note of the note by the secretariat on enhancing regional cooperation for seamless trade and transport connectivity in times of pandemic (ESCAP/77/2).

Decision 2

Subregional cooperation to build back better from crises in Asia and the Pacific

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission took note of the note by the secretariat on subregional cooperation to build back better from crises in Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP/77/3).

Decision 3

Summary of the Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2021: Strengthening the Resilience of Least Developed Countries in the Wake of the Coronavirus Disease Pandemic

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission took note of the summary of the Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2021: Strengthening the Resilience of Least Developed Countries in the Wake of the Coronavirus Disease Pandemic (ESCAP/77/4).

Decision 4

Matters calling for action by the Commission or brought to its attention emanating from the meetings of its subsidiary bodies held in the period 2020–2021

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission endorsed the matters calling for its action or brought to its attention emanating from the meetings of its subsidiary bodies held in the period 2020–2021 (ESCAP/77/7).

Decision 5

Reports of intergovernmental bodies and meetings held in the period 2020–2021

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission endorsed the following documents:

(a) Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its fifteenth session (ESCAP/77/5);

(b) Report of the Eighth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (ESCAP/77/8);

(c) Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its fifteenth session (ESCAP/77/9); (d) Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its sixteenth session (ESCAP/77/10);

(e) Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its sixteenth session (ESCAP/77/12);

(f) Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its sixteenth session (ESCAP/77/15);

(g) Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its fifth session (ESCAP/77/18).

Decision 6

Report of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission took note of the report of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (ESCAP/77/27).

Decision 7

Other documents on the review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission took note of the following documents:

(a) Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions (ESCAP/77/6);

(b) Promoting meaningful and affordable access to broadband Internet for inclusive development (ESCAP/77/11);

(c) Is everyone in the picture? Civil registration in the middle of the coronavirus disease pandemic (ESCAP/77/13);

(d) Report on the sixth session of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022 (ESCAP/77/14);

(e) Report of the 6th meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation (ESCAP/77/16);

(f) Enhancing energy security in the context of the coronavirus disease pandemic for a greener, more resilient and inclusive energy future in the region (ESCAP/77/17);

(g) Pathways for managing systemic risks in Asia and the Pacific: regional and subregional approaches (ESCAP/77/19);

(h) Economic policies and financing strategies to build resilient, inclusive and sustainable economies (ESCAP/77/20);

(i) Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission (ESCAP/77/INF/1).

Decision 8

Elections of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development and the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission, in light of the exceptional circumstances brought about by the coronavirus disease pandemic, decided to defer the elections of the Governing Councils of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development and of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization to the seventy-eighth

session of the Commission, in 2022, and to extend, on an exceptional basis, the term of the current members of both Councils by one year.

Decision 9 Proposed programme plan for 2022

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission endorsed the proposed programme plan for 2022 (ESCAP/77/21).

Decision 10 Proposed programme changes for the 2021 programme plan

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission endorsed the proposed programme changes for the 2021 programme plan (ESCAP/77/22).

Decision 11

Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission took note of the note by the secretariat on the overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development (ESCAP/77/23) and expressed its appreciation for the following contributions pledged by members and associate members for 2021:

1. *Bangladesh*. The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Bangladesh would make the following contributions:

APCICT	\$10 000
APCTT	\$7 000
CSAM	\$3 000
SIAP	\$5 000

2. *Brunei Darussalam*. The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Brunei Darussalam would make the following contributions:

SIAP	\$15 000
Pacific Trust Fund	\$1 000

3. *China*. The delegation of China announced that its Government would make the following contributions:

China-ESCAP Cooperation Programme	\$1 000 000 and RMB 1 500 000
APCTT	\$27 000
CSAM	\$1 600 000
SIAP	\$70 000
Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilitie	es \$10 000
NEASPEC	\$45 000

4. *India*. The delegation of India announced that its Government would make the following contributions:

APCTT	\$870 000
SIAP	\$25 000
Subregional Office for South and South-West Asia	\$79 000

5. *Japan*. The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Japan would make the following contributions for the period from April 2021 to March 2022:

Japan-ESCAP Cooperation Fund	\$24 840
SIAP	\$1 843 765

In addition, the Government of Japan would make a contribution in kind equivalent to \$1,100,852 to SIAP for the period from April 2021 to March 2022.

6. *Macao, China*. The secretariat had received written notification that the government of Macao, China, would make the following contributions:

APCICT	\$5 000
APCTT	\$5 000
APDIM	\$10 000
SIAP	\$20 000

7. *Myanmar*. The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Myanmar would make the following contributions:

ESCAP Programme of Work	\$2 000
SIAP	\$1 000

8. *Republic of Korea*. The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of the Republic of Korea would make the following contributions:

Korea-ESCAP Cooperation Fund	\$255 387
ESCAP Programme of Work	\$522 603
Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities	\$329 245
NEASPEC	\$265 141
Capacity Development Trust Fund for APTA Promotion and Trade Facilitation Activities	\$220 000
Seoul Initiative on Green Growth	\$100 000
APCICT	\$1 628 234
APCICT (programme of work)	\$44 338
APCTT	\$26 202
CSAM	\$10 000
SIAP	\$53 546
SIAP (training programmes)	\$59 086
Subregional Office for East and North-East Asia	\$1 141 000

9. *Russian Federation*. The Government of the Russian Federation had made the following contributions:

Russian Federation Fund	\$1 200 000
SIAP	\$30 000

10. *Thailand*. The secretariat had received written notification that the Government of Thailand would make the following contributions:

APCTT	\$15 000
CSAM	\$15 000
SIAP	\$23 000
Pacific Trust Fund	\$1 000

Decision 12

Evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development pursuant to resolution 71/1

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission endorsed the report on the evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (ESCAP/77/24) and took note of the information document on the evaluation of the Centre (ESCAP/77/INF/2/Rev.1).

Decision 13

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

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission took note of the report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ESCAP/77/25).

Decision 14

Dates and venue of and theme topic for the seventy-eighth session of the Commission (2022)

At its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021, the Commission decided that its seventy-eighth session would be held in Bangkok from 23 to 27 May 2022. The Commission also decided that the theme topic for its seventy-eighth session would be "A common agenda to advance sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific". The Commission further decided to postpone the third Ministerial Conference on Regional Economic Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific to 2022 (ESCAP/77/26).

Chapter II

Organization of the seventy-seventh session of the Commission

A. Attendance and organization of work

3. The seventy-seventh session of the Commission was held in Bangkok and online from 26 to 29 April 2021 owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. The session was attended by representatives of the following members and associate members:

Members

Afghanistan Armenia Australia Azerbaijan Bangladesh Bhutan Brunei Darussalam Cambodia China Democratic People's Republic of Korea Fiji France Georgia India Indonesia Iran (Islamic Republic of) Japan Kazakhstan Kiribati Kyrgyzstan Lao People's Democratic Republic Malaysia Maldives Marshall Islands Micronesia (Federated States of) Mongolia Myanmar Nauru Nepal New Zealand Pakistan Papua New Guinea Philippines Republic of Korea **Russian Federation** Singapore Solomon Islands Sri Lanka Tajikistan Thailand Timor-Leste Tonga Turkey Turkmenistan Tuvalu United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland United States of America Uzbekistan Vanuatu Viet Nam

Associate members

Hong Kong, China Macao, China

5. By virtue of rule 3 of the Commission's rules of procedure, representatives of Belgium, Egypt, Germany, Israel, Italy, Mexico and San Marino attended. Representatives of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also attended.

6. Representatives of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States attended.

7. Representatives of the following United Nations specialized agencies, funds, programmes and other United Nations entities attended: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; International Civil Aviation Organization; International Labour Organization; International Monetary Fund; Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; United Nations Children's Fund; United Nations Development Programme; United Nations Environment Programme; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; United Nations Institute for Training and Research; World Bank; and World Meteorological Organization.

8. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations attended as observers: Asian Productivity Organization; Association of Southeast Asian Nations; Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation; Coordinating Committee for Geoscience Programmes in East and South-East Asia; Economic Cooperation Organization; Eurasian Economic Commission; Greater Tumen Initiative; International Atomic Energy Agency; International Coconut Community; International Transport Forum; Islamic Development Bank; Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; Pacific Community; Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat; Shanghai Cooperation Organization; South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation; and Transport Corridor Europe Caucasus-Asia.

9. Observers were present from the following non-governmental organizations and other entities: International Federation of Business and Professional Women; Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association; Soroptimist International; and Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta.

10. The list of participants is available at www.unescap.org/commission/77.

11. In accordance with rule 13 of its rules of procedure, the Commission elected Mr. Mukhtar Tileuberdi (Kazakhstan) as Chair of the seventy-seventh session.

12. The Commission also elected the following Vice-Chairs:

Ms. Millicent Cruz-Paredes (Philippines) Mrs. Suchitra Durai (India) Mr. Tumur Amarsanaa (Mongolia) Mr. Paul Stephens (Australia)

13. The Commission also constituted the Working Group on Draft Resolutions to consider the draft resolutions and draft decisions submitted prior to the session. Mr. Asim Iftikhar Ahmad (Pakistan) was elected Chair and Mr. Andrew Beirne (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) was elected Vice-Chair of the Working Group.

14. In accordance with rule 12 of the Commission's rules of procedure, the Chair and Vice-Chairs examined the credentials of all the representatives and found them to be in order.

B. Agenda

- 15. The Commission adopted the following agenda:
 - 1. Opening of the session:
 - (a) Opening addresses;
 - (b) Election of officers;
 - (c) Adoption of the agenda.
 - 2. Theme topic, "Building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific":
 - (a) General debate;
 - (b) Subregional perspectives.
 - 3. Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Pacific Island Developing Countries.
 - 4. Review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific and issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission:
 - (a) Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development;
 - (b) Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation;
 - (c) Committee on Statistics;
 - (d) Committee on Social Development;
 - (e) Committee on Transport;
 - (f) Committee on Environment and Development;
 - (g) Committee on Trade and Investment;
 - (h) Committee on Energy;
 - (i) Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction;
 - (j) Committee on Macroeconomic Policy, Poverty Reduction and Financing for Development.
 - 5. Management issues:
 - (a) Proposed programme plan for 2022;
 - (b) Programme changes for the 2021 programme plan;
 - (c) Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development;
 - (d) Report on the evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development.
 - 6. Activities of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission.

- 7. Dates and venue of and theme topic for the seventy-eighth session of the Commission (2022).
- 8. Other matters.
- 9. Adoption of the report of the Commission.

C. Opening of the session

16. Mr. Mukhtar Tileuberdi (Kazakhstan) presided over the opening of the seventy-seventh session, on 26 April 2021. Video messages from Mr. Volkan Bozkır (Turkey), President of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly; Mr. Munir Akram (Pakistan), seventy-sixth President of the Economic and Social Council; and General Prayut Chan-o-cha (Ret.), Prime Minister of Thailand, were played. The Executive Secretary of ESCAP delivered a statement from the Secretary-General as well as her own welcome remarks and a policy statement.

17. The following Heads of State addressed the Commission in video messages: Mr. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, President of Afghanistan; Mr. Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan; Mr. Joko Widodo, President of Indonesia; Mr. Taneti Maamau, President, Head of Government and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Immigration of Kiribati; Mr. Sadyr Japarov, President of Kyrgyzstan; Mr. David Kabua, President of the Marshall Islands; Mr. Battulga Khaltmaa, President of Mongolia; and Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of Tajikistan.

18. The following Heads of Government addressed the Commission in video messages: Mr. Kausea Natano, Prime Minister of Tuvalu and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum for 2020–2021; Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh; Dr. Lotay Tshering, Prime Minister of Bhutan; Mr. Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia; Mr. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji; Mr. Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan; Mr. Mahinda Rajapaksa, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka; and Mr. Abdulla Aripov, Prime Minister of Uzbekistan.

D. Adoption of the report of the Commission

19. The report of the Commission was adopted at its 7th plenary meeting, on 29 April 2021.

Chapter III

Work of the Commission since the seventy-sixth session

A. Activities of subsidiary bodies

20. During the period under review, the following intergovernmental meetings and meetings of subsidiary bodies were held:

- (a) Committees:
 - (i) Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation (third session);
 - (ii) Committee on Statistics (seventh session);
 - (iii) Committee on Social Development (sixth session);
 - (iv) Committee on Transport (sixth session);
 - (v) Committee on Environment and Development (sixth session);
 - (vi) Committee on Trade and Investment (seventh session);
 - (vii) Committee on Energy (third session);
- (b) Governing councils:
 - Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (fifteenth session);
 - (ii) Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (sixteenth session);
 - (iii) Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology (sixteenth session);
 - (iv) Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization (sixteenth session);
 - (v) Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management (fifth session);
- (c) Other intergovernmental meetings:
 - (i) Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (fifteenth session);
 - (ii) Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;
 - (iii) Eighth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development.

21. The dates, bureaux and document symbols of the reports of the meetings are given in annex II. The reports reflect the discussions held, the agreements reached and the decisions taken.

B. Publications

22. The list of publications issued since the seventy-sixth session of the Commission and pre-session documents submitted to it at its present session are listed in annex III.

C. Relations with other United Nations bodies

23. The secretariat maintained close and regular contact with various divisions at Headquarters and with the secretariats of the other regional commissions on projects of common interest.

Annex I

Statement of programme budget implications of actions and proposals of the Commission

1. The requests contained in the resolution listed below will have no programme budget implications for the approved programme budget for 2021^1 and the proposed programme budget of the United Nations for 2022:²

• Resolution ESCAP/RES/77/1: Building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific.

2. As appropriate, extrabudgetary resources will be sought for the implementation of the activities required under the above-mentioned resolution.

¹ See General Assembly resolution 75/254 A–C.

² A/76/6 (Sect. 19).

Annex II

Meetings of subsidiary bodies and other intergovernmental bodies held since the seventy-sixth session of the Commission

	Subsid	diary bodies and officers	Session	Document symbol
Committees				
[.	Committee on Information and Communications Technology, Science, Technology and Innovation		Third session Bangkok 19 and 20 August 2020	ESCAP/CICTSTI/ 2020/7
	Chair:	Mr. Renato U. Solidum, Jr. (Philippines)		
	Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Bambang Brodjonegoro (Indonesia)		
		Mr. Asim Iftikhar Ahmad (Pakistan)		
		Mr. Elmir Velizade (Azerbaijan)		
		Mr. Mahdi Mohammadi (Islamic Republic of Iran)		
		Mr. Fualau Talatalaga Matafeo (Samoa)		
II.	Committee on Statistics		Seventh session Bangkok 26–28 August 2020	ESCAP/CST/2020/6
	Chair:	Mr. Gogita Todradze (Georgia)		
	Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Mohd Uzir Mahidin (Malaysia)		
		Mr. Pravin Srivastava (India) for the first half and Mrs. Indu Bandara (Sri Lanka) for the second half (sharing arrangement)		
		Mr. Kemueli Naiqama (Fiji)		
	Member:	Ms. Bayanchimeg Chilkhaasuren (Mongolia)		
	Rapporteur:	Mr. Claire Dennis Mapa (Philippines)		
I II.	Committee o	on Social Development	Sixth session Bangkok 20 and 21 October 2020	ESCAP/CSD/2020/3
	Chair:	Mrs. Samantha K. Jayasuriya (Sri Lanka)		
	Vice-Chairs:	Ms. Suzilah Binti Mohd Sidek (Malaysia)		
IV.	Committee o	on Transport	Sixth session Bangkok 12 and 13 November 2020	ESCAP/CTR/2020/0
	Chair:	Mr. Jalavsuren Bat-Erdene (Mongolia)		
	Vice-Chairs:	Ms. Raushan Yesbulatova (Kazakhstan)		
		Ms. Suzilah Mohd Sidek (Malaysia)		

	Subsid	diary bodies and officers	Session	Document symbol
v.	Committee on Environment and Development		Sixth session Bangkok 9 and 10 December 2020	ESCAP/CED/2020/
	Chair:	Ms. Suchitra Durai (India)		
	Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Oleg Shamanov (Russian Federation)		
		Mr. Dicky Komar (Indonesia)		
VI.	. Committee on Trade and Investment		Seventh session Bangkok 27–29 January 2021	ESCAP/CTI/2021/4
	Chair:	Mr. Vangelis Vitalis (New Zealand)		
	Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Tumur Amarsanaa (Mongolia)		
		Mr. Rachmat Budiman (Indonesia)		
VII.	. Committee on Energy		Third session Bangkok 24–26 February 2021	ESCAP/CE/2021/6
	Chair:	Mr. Jone Usamate (Fiji)		
	Vice-Chairs:	Ms. Raushan Yesbulatova (Kazakhstan)		
		Mr. Tumur Amarsanaa (Mongolia)		
		Mr. Ganesh Prasad Dhakal (Nepal)		
		Ms. Premrutai Vinaiphat (Thailand)		
		Governing councils of regional in	istitutions	
I.	-	ouncil of the Asian and Pacific Training formation and Communication Technology tent	Fifteenth session Online 26 November 2020	ESCAP/77/9
	Chair:	Mr. Sungjoon Choi (Republic of Korea)		
	Vice-Chair:	Ms. Maria Lourdes Pacis Aquilizan (Philippines)		
II.	Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific		Sixteenth session Chiba, Japan 30 November and 1 December 2020	ESCAP/77/12
	Chair:	Ms. Hataichanok Chinauparwat (Thailand)		
	Vice-Chair:	Mr. Akira Tsumura (Japan)		
Ш.	. Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology		Sixteenth session Guangzhou, China 2 and 3 December 2020	ESCAP/77/10
	Chair:	Mr. Linhao Chen (China)		
	Vice-Chair:	Mr. Jayasuriya Arachchige Ajith Dhammika Jayasuriya (Sri Lanka)		

	Subsi	diary bodies and officers	Session	Document symbol
IV.	Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization		Sixteenth session Beijing 4 December 2020	ESCAP/77/15
	Chair:	Ms. Thi Tam Dinh (Viet Nam)		
	Vice-Chair:	Mr. Azman Bin Hamzah (Malaysia)		
v.	Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management		Fifth session Online 26 January 2021	ESCAP/77/18
	Chair:	Mr. Seyed Hamid Pourmohammadi Gelsefedi (Islamic Republic of Iran)		
	Vice-Chair:	Mr. Muhammet Maruf Yaman (Turkey)		
		Other intergovernmental mee	rtings	
I.	Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia		Fifteenth session Online 18 and 19 November 2020	ESCAP/77/5
	Chair:	Mr. Sultan Akhmatov (Kyrgyzstan)		
II.	II. Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration		Bangkok and online 10–12 March 2021	ESCAP/77/27
	Chair:	Ms. Sarah Lou Y. Arriola (Philippines)		
	Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Mohammed Abdul Hye (Bangladesh)		
		Mr. Dicky Komar (Indonesia)		
		Mr. Nadhavathna Krishnamra (Thailand)		
III.	I. Eighth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development		Bangkok and online 23–26 March 2021	ESCAP/77/8
	Chair:	Ms. Mereseini Rakuita Vuniwaqa (Fiji)		
	Vice-Chairs:	Mr. Asim Iftikhar Ahmad (Pakistan)		
		Ms. Huda Ali Shareef (Maldives)		

Annex III

Publications and documents issued by the Commission

A. Publications issued since the seventy-sixth session*

Executive direction and management

ESCAP Annual Report 2020.

What's Ahead @ ESCAP.**

Beyond the Pandemic: Building Back Better from Crises in Asia and the Pacific. ST/ESCAP/2943 (Sales No. E.21.II.F.6).

Subprogramme 1

Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and financing for development

- Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2021: Strengthening the Resilience of Least Developed Countries in the Wake of the Coronavirus Disease Pandemic. ST/ESCAP/2950 (Sales No. E.21.II.F.7).
- Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Journal. Vol. 27, No. 1, June 2020. ST/ESCAP/2911 (Sales No. E.20.II.12).
- Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2021: Towards Post-COVID-19 Resilient Economies. ST/ESCAP/2942 (Sales No. E.21.II.F.5).
- *Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Leaving No Country Behind* (published jointly by ESCAP, the Asian Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme).

MPFD Policy Briefs:**

- No. 111, May 2020: "Addressing the impact of the pandemic on tourism in Asia-Pacific small island developing States".
- No. 112, May 2020: "Combating COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific: measures, lessons and the way forward".
- No. 113, July 2020: "Coping with COVID-19 and enhancing long-term resilience to future shocks: an assessment of fuel-exporting countries in Asia and the Pacific".
- No. 114, August 2020: "Can this time be different? Challenges and opportunities for Asia-Pacific economies in the aftermath of COVID-19".
- No. 115, September 2020: "Supporting sustainable development in the COVID-19 era through fisheries in Asia-Pacific small island developing States".
- No. 116, November 2020: "An assessment of fiscal space for COVID-19 response".
- No. 117, December 2020: "Financial support by MDBs and IFIs to Asia-Pacific region in the time of COVID-19: helpful, but is it sufficient?".

^{*} Where applicable, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) document symbol and (in parentheses) United Nations publication sales numbers are noted.

^{**} A double asterisk denotes publications that are available online only.

- MPFD Working Papers:**
 - WP/20/04, May 2020: "Graduation of Bhutan from the group of least developed countries: potential implications and policy imperatives".
 - WP/20/05, May 2020: "Government budget and the Sustainable Development Goals: the Philippine experience".
 - WP/20/06, May 2020: "Mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into national planning, budgetary and financing processes: Indonesian experience".
 - WP/20/07, June 2020: "Public-private partnership system and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific".
 - WP/20/08, June 2020: "Strengthening financial interlinkages among the SPECA countries".
 - WP/20/09, September 2020: "Financing structure, micro and small enterprises" performance and woman entrepreneurship in Indonesia".
 - ESCAP/1-WP/1, March 2021: "Factors affecting the environmental and social risk management of financial institutions in selected Asia-Pacific developing countries".
 - ESCAP/1-WP/2, March 2021: "Structural transformation in graduating Pacific least developed countries (LDCs)".

Subprogramme 2 Trade, investment and innovation¹

Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Trends 2020/2021:**

- December 2020: "Preferential trade agreements in Asia and the Pacific: trends and developments".
- December 2020: "Foreign direct investment trends and outlook in Asia and the Pacific".
- December 2020: "Trade in commercial services outlook in Asia and the Pacific".

December 2020: "Trade in goods outlook in Asia and the Pacific".

- Studies in Trade, Investment and Innovation Series. No. 93, Outward Foreign Direct Investment and Home Country Sustainable Development. ST/ESCAP/2899 (Sales No. E.20.II.F.14).**
- *Trade, Investment and Innovation Working Paper Series.* No. 02, December 2020: "Towards low-cost digital remittances: supporting migrants during COVID-19 pandemic and beyond".^{**}

Subprogramme 3 Transport

Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Pacific: No. 90. ST/ESCAP/SER.E/90.**

1

Including the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology.

Subprogramme 5 Information and communications technology and disaster risk reduction and management

Asia-Pacific Information Superhighway Working Paper Series:**

- September 2020: "Policy responses to COVID-19: repurposing national highways for good".
- November 2020: "Risk-informed infrastructure planning: Central Asia pilot in Kazakhstan and Kyrgyz Republic".
- November 2020: "Understanding e-resilience for pandemic recovery in Asia and the Pacific".

Subprogramme 7 Statistics

- Asia and the Pacific SDG Progress Report 2021. ST/ESCAP/2935 (Sales No. E.21.II.F.4).
- SD Working Paper Series. Working Paper Series (SD/WP/12/January 2021): "Big data for the SDGs: country examples in compiling SDG indicators using non-traditional data sources". **

Stats Brief:**

- No. 25, July 2020: "Engaging with development partners to stand-up COVID-19 rapid assessment surveys".
- No. 26, October 2020: "Population registers: a key resource for producing vital statistics".
- No. 27, December 2020: "Geospatial information and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".
- No. 28, March 2021: "Big data for economic statistics".

Subprogramme 9 Energy

- Regional Trends Report 2021: Shaping a Sustainable Energy Future in Asia and the Pacific A Greener, More Resilient and Inclusive Energy System. ST/ESCAP/2933 (Sales No. E.21.II.F.3).
- Regional Energy Trends Report 2020: Tracking SDG 7 in the ASEAN Region. ST/ESCAP/2921 (Sales No. E.21.II.F.2).

Document symbol	Document title	Agenda iten
	Limited documents	
ESCAP/77/L.1	Provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/77/L.2	Annotated provisional agenda	1 (c)
ESCAP/77/L.3	Draft report: Organization of the seventy-seventh session of the Commission	9
ESCAP/77/L.3/Add.1	Draft report: Statement of programme budget implications of actions and proposals of the Commission	9
ESCAP/77/L.4	Draft resolution: Building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific	2
ESCAP/77/L.5	Draft decisions	9
	Regular documents	
ESCAP/77/1	Summary of the theme study on building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific	2 (a)
ESCAP/77/2	Enhancing regional cooperation for seamless trade and transport connectivity in times of pandemic	2 (a)
ESCAP/77/3	Subregional cooperation to build back better from crises in Asia and the Pacific	2 (b)
ESCAP/77/4	Summary of the Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2021: Strengthening the Resilience of Least Developed Countries in the Wake of the Coronavirus Disease Pandemic	3
ESCAP/77/5	Report of the Governing Council of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia on its fifteenth session	4
ESCAP/77/6	Summary of progress in the implementation of Commission resolutions	3–5
ESCAP/77/7	Summary of the meetings of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission held in the period 2020–2021	4
ESCAP/77/8	Report of the Eighth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development	4 (a)
ESCAP/77/9	Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development on its fifteenth session	4 (b)
ESCAP/77/10	Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for Transfer of Technology on its sixteenth session	4 (b)
ESCAP/77/11	Promoting meaningful and affordable access to broadband Internet for inclusive development	4 (b)
ESCAP/77/12	Report of the Governing Council of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific on its sixteenth session	4 (c)
ESCAP/77/13	Is everyone in the picture? Civil registration in the middle of the coronavirus disease pandemic	4 (c)
ESCAP/77/14	Report on the sixth session of the Working Group on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013–2022	4 (d)

B. Documents submitted to the Commission at its seventy-seventh session

Document symbol	Document title	Agenda item
ESCAP/77/15	Report of the Governing Council of the Centre for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanization on its sixteenth session	4 (f)
ESCAP/77/16	Report of the 6th meeting of the Interim Intergovernmental Steering Group on Cross-border Paperless Trade Facilitation	4 (g)
ESCAP/77/17	Enhancing energy security in the context of the coronavirus disease pandemic for a greener, more resilient and inclusive energy future in the region	4 (h)
ESCAP/77/18	Report of the Governing Council of the Asian and Pacific Centre for the Development of Disaster Information Management on its fifth session	4 (i)
ESCAP/77/19	Pathways for managing systemic risks in Asia and the Pacific: regional and subregional approaches	4 (i)
ESCAP/77/20	Economic policies and financing strategies to build resilient, inclusive and sustainable economies	4 (j)
ESCAP/77/21	Proposed programme plan for 2022	5 (a)
ESCAP/77/22	Programme changes for the 2021 programme plan	5 (b)
ESCAP/77/23	Overview of partnerships, extrabudgetary contributions and capacity development	5 (c)
ESCAP/77/24	Report on the evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development	5 (d)
ESCAP/77/25	Report of the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission	6
ESCAP/77/26	Dates and venue of and theme topic for the seventy-eighth session of the Commission (2022)	7
ESCAP/77/27	Report of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration	4 (d)
	Information documents	
ESCAP/77/INF/1	Annual reports of international and intergovernmental organizations provided to the Commission	4
ESCAP/77/INF/2/Rev.1	Evaluation of the Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development	5 (d)





