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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Committee on Social Development  
Fourteenth session  
Beirut, 8 June 2023

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

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**Inequality in the Arab region**

8. Inequality in the Arab region:
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9. Date and venue of the fifteenth session of the Committee on Social Development.
10. Other matters.
11. Adoption of recommendations made by the Committee at its fourteenth session.

## **Annotations**

1. Opening of the session

The fourteenth session of the Committee on Social Development will open at 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, 8 June 2023, at the UN House in Beirut. The representative of the State that chaired the thirteenth session of the Committee will make a welcome statement, followed by an opening address by the representative of the ESCWA secretariat.

2. Election of officers

Rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia states: “Member States shall chair the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations. Unless the Commission decides otherwise, those bodies shall elect all their other officers”.<sup>\*</sup> The Committee shall elect two vice-chairs and a rapporteur from representatives of member States.

3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 8 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which applies to subsidiary bodies, states: “At the beginning of each session, once the Chair has assumed his/her duties in accordance with rule 12, the Commission shall adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda”. Pursuant to that rule, the Committee will adopt the provisional agenda and annotations for this session in document E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/L.1 and the organization of work in document E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/L.2, or as amended.

## **Follow-up issues**

4. Implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme plan and of recommendations made by the Committee on Social Development at its thirteenth session (E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/3)

The Committee will review the activities implemented in the field of social development since its thirteenth session, held virtually on 22 and 23 September 2021, including activities under the ESCWA programme plan and those undertaken pursuant to the recommendations made by the Committee at its thirteenth session and addressed to the ESCWA secretariat.

The Committee is invited to review these activities and express views on them.

5. Technical cooperation activities (E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/4)

The Committee will consider technical cooperation activities carried out by the ESCWA secretariat in the field of social development since its thirteenth session, in response to requests from member States. Those activities included advisory services and capacity development activities.

The Committee is invited to take note of those activities and discuss technical cooperation priorities and needs for the coming years.

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<sup>\*</sup> ESCWA member States in the Arabic alphabetical order are as follows: Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Mauritania and Yemen.

6. Activities of the Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability (E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/5)

The Committee will review the activities carried out by the Intersessional Group of Experts on Disability (IGED) since its thirteenth session and the priorities identified for its future work. IGED was established pursuant to a recommendation made by the Committee at its tenth session, held in Rabat on 8 and 9 September 2015, to follow up on disability issues between sessions of the Committee; support member States in implementing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; and increase regional cooperation in that field.

The Committee is invited to take note of IGED activities and priorities and provide comments thereon to guide its work in the coming period.

7. Activities of the Expert Group on Social Protection Reform (E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/6)

The Committee will review the activities of the Expert Group on Social Protection Reform (EGSPR), since its thirteenth session and the priorities identified for its future work. EGSPR was established pursuant to a recommendation made by the Committee at its twelfth session held in Beirut, on 8 and 9 October 2019, to support regional coordination, cooperation and the exchange of experiences on social protection issues.

The Committee is invited to review EGSPR activities, to take note of the progress made, and to provide comments to guide EGSPR work in the coming period.

### **Inequality in the Arab region**

8. Inequality in the Arab region (E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/7)

The Committee will discuss the issue of inequality with reference to the three below documents:

(a) The Arab inequality pandemic (E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/7(Part I))

The Committee will discuss the challenge of high inequality in the Arab region, on the basis of a document that sheds light on who has been left behind and the multiple types of inequalities they face.

The Committee is invited to provide comments on means to tackle the multiple facets of inequality in the Arab region.

(b) Inequality in employment (E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/7(Part II))

The Committee will discuss youth unemployment as a pertinent type of inequality in the Arab region, in particular the barriers to decent employment for young people.

The Committee is invited to provide comments on means to tackle youth unemployment in the Arab region.

(c) Practical initiatives to increase social and economic equality (E/ESCWA/C.2/2023/7(Part III))

The Committee will consider a range of policy tools and initiatives produced and implemented by the ESCWA secretariat to successfully reduce inequality. The Committee will also consider the three-pronged approach of ESCWA for developing and implementing policies that target

inequality, namely: (a) promoting social solidarity; (b) delivering visible impact; and (c) securing credibility and trust.

The Committee is invited to provide comments on both the approach and initiatives of ESCWA and discuss means to further reduce inequality in the Arab region.

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9. Date and venue of the fifteenth session of the Committee on Social Development

The Committee shall agree on the date and venue of its fifteenth session.

10. Other matters

This item will cover any other matters that the Committee may decide to discuss when adopting the agenda.

11. Adoption of recommendations made by the Committee at its fourteenth session

The Committee will consider the draft recommendations for discussion and adoption.

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