

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

Committee on Technology for Development
Second session
Beirut, 20-21 March 2019



Information for participants

1. *Background*

The Committee on Technology for Development of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) was established pursuant to ESCWA resolution [315 \(XXVIII\)](#) of 18 September 2014, which was adopted by the Economic and Social Council in resolution [2014/35](#) of 17 November 2014. The Committee's mandate includes following up on regional priorities in the field of technology for development, including scientific research and innovation, the digital economy and the information society, Internet governance, technology transfer and knowledge-based economies; keeping pace with developments in those fields and preparing recommendations thereon; following up on relevant regional and international processes, conferences and forums, and coordinating regional efforts to implement decisions and recommendations of those conferences; and promoting the work of the ESCWA secretariat in building capacity and supporting cooperation with relevant ministerial councils of the League of Arab States and related organizations, such as the Council of Arab Ministers of Communication and Information Technology and the Arab Administrative Development Organization, to align policies and strategies, forge partnerships and coordinate positions at the international level. The Committee on Technology for Development meets biennially. Its first session was held in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, on 11 and 12 February 2017.

2. *Date and venue*

The second session of the Committee on Technology for Development will be held at the United Nations House in Beirut, on 20 and 21 March 2019. Registration will commence at 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 20 March 2019, and the opening session will convene at 9 a.m. on the same day. Sessions will conclude at 4 p.m. on Thursday, 21 March 2019.

3. *Participants*

Representatives of ESCWA member States have been invited to participate in the session. Participating Governments are responsible for the travel and accommodation expenses of their representatives, in accordance with United Nations practice. Several regional and international organizations and institutions working in the field of technology also received invitations to participate in the session as observers. They too are responsible for the travel and accommodation expenses of their representatives.

4. *Entry visas*

Participants may obtain entry visas to Lebanon through the Lebanese Embassy in their respective countries. It is recommended to attach the invitation letter sent by ESCWA to the visa application. Participants who need assistance in this matter should send a scanned copy, in colour, of their passport containing all the required information to the secretariat at least two weeks before the meeting.

5. *Accommodation and transportation*

The ESCWA secretariat suggests that participants book their accommodation at a Beirut hotel near the United Nations House. The secretariat has prepared a list of hotels offering preferential rates, which will be sent to participants by email. To receive the preferential rate, participants are requested to inform the hotel that they are participating in a meeting organized by ESCWA. Participants are also requested to organize transport to and from the airport with their respective hotel.

6. *Languages of the session*

Session proceedings will be in Arabic.

7. *Travel services*

Travel assistance is available through the ESCWA Travel Unit located on the first floor of the United Nations House (room F-140, ext. 1143 or 1187), which is open during office hours from 7.30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

8. *Medical services*

Medical facilities in cases of emergency will be provided at ESCWA during official working hours from Monday to Friday, from 7.30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The ESCWA clinic is located on the first floor of the United Nations House (rooms F-145 to F-147, ext. 1145 or 1146). For serious emergencies, the clinic will ensure immediate transport by ambulance and admission to a hospital with first-class facilities.

In the event of a medical emergency, the following ESCWA staff can be contacted for assistance and guidance:

Name	Position	Telephone
Dr. Josette Sfeir	Doctor	+961-1-978144
Ms. Lina Soubra	Nurse	+961-1-978145
Ms. Maya Louka	Nurse	+961-1-978146
Ms. Lamia el-Hage	Administrative Officer	+961-1-978139

There are many hospitals in Beirut with efficient medical equipment, including the following four major university hospitals within a short drive from the United Nations House:

Hospital	Telephone
American University of Beirut Medical Centre	+961-1-350000/374374
Hôtel-Dieu de France Hospital	+961-1-615400/615300
Saint-George Hospital University Medical Centre	+961-1-441000 +961-1-575700/1287
Rafic Hariri University Hospital	+961-1-830000

9. *Security and safety*

The ESCWA Security and Safety Section (ground floor, ext. 1025) operates on a 24-hour basis and maintains contact with all local emergency services and relevant authorities. Security officers are always prepared to provide assistance in all matters relating to security and safety.

10. *Internet access*

Wireless Internet is available on all floors, including the ground floor and MZ and B1 conference areas. Access to the Internet requires a passkey, which is posted in public areas on each floor.

A computer room is also available at the B1 level to facilitate access to email services and the Internet.

11. *Telecommunication services*

The country code for Lebanon is (+961). The area code is (01) for Beirut and (03), (70), (71), (76), (80) or (81) for mobile phones. If you are dialing Lebanon from outside the country, you must omit the (0) in the area code and for mobile phones starting with (03). For example, to reach the ESCWA secretariat from outside Lebanon, you may dial the country code +961 followed by the mobile or area code then by the six-digit phone number (+961-1-xxxxxx for calls to Beirut, or +961-3-xxxxxx or +961-70-xxxxxx for calls to mobile phone numbers).

The main listed telephone number of ESCWA is +961-1-981301. Direct calls can be made to staff member from inside Lebanon by dialing 01-978 followed by the last three digits of the four-digit extension of the party sought. For example, if the extension being sought is 1900 then the number to dial from inside Lebanon would be 01-978900. Direct internal calls from within the United Nations House can be made by dialing the four-digit extension.

Information on telephone calls may be obtained from the ESCWA Communications Unit (room F-229, ext. 1229). The operator may be reached within the building by dialing "9". Personal telephone calls, fax, mail and courier services are provided against cash payment.

12. *Prayer room*

The prayer room is located at the mezzanine (MZ) level.

13. *Library*

A large library occupies most of the second floor of the United Nations House and is open Monday to Friday from 10.30 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. for external users. Visitors have access, on the premises only, to publications, journals and newspapers, the Internet and online databases. The library also provides research services on any topic of interest to them.

14. *Transport*

Many transport agencies in Beirut provide modern buses for sightseeing and tourist trips across Lebanon. There are numerous car rental and taxi offices in Beirut. Commuting between hotels and the United Nations House can be made by taxi or "service". "Service" vehicles may be hailed in the street; however, it is recommended to use taxi companies, which are considered safer. Popular online taxi apps are widely used in Lebanon.

The following are telephone numbers for popular taxi companies:

Company name	Number
Charlie Taxi	1514
Allo Taxi	1213
Trust Taxi	+961-1-427777
Lebanon Taxi	+961-1-353153
Geryes Taxi	+961-1-333666
Alliance Taxi	+961-1-245555
	+961-3-010555
White Taxi	+961-1-513593
	+961-71-722199

15. *Time zone*

Lebanese time is GMT+2 hours.

16. *Weather*

During the meeting, the temperature in Beirut is expected to range between 18°C and 22°C.

17. *Currency and exchange rates*

The unit of currency is the Lebanese pound. The current exchange rate is LBP 1,500 for \$1.

18. *Electrical current*

The electrical current is 220 volts AC country-wide. Note that plug sockets in Lebanon have two pins.

19. *Useful numbers in Lebanon*

Internal security forces (police)	112
Civil defense	125
Fire brigade	175
Red Cross	140
Telephone directory (Ogero)	1515
Beirut International Airport inquiries	150

20. *Tourism*

Lebanon is home to several historical sites and tourist attractions. For more information, visit the following websites: <http://www.mot.gov.lb>; <http://www.destinationlebanon.gov.lb>; and <http://www.lebanon.com/tourism>.

21. *Correspondence*

All session-related correspondence should be sent to:

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