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Agenda item 7

Adoption of the report of the Committee on its fifty-ninth session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Mr. Jun Yamada (Japan)

Addendum

Programme questions: proposed programme budget for the year 2020

(Item 3 (a))

Programme 17

Economic development in Europe

1. At its 16th meeting, on 13 June 2019, the Committee considered programme 17, Economic development in Europe, of the proposed programme plan for 2020 and programme performance information for 2018 ([A/74/6 \(Sect.20\)](#)). The Committee also had before it a note by the Secretariat on the review of the proposed programme plan by sectoral, functional and regional bodies ([E/AC.51/2019/CRP.1/Rev.2](#)).

2. The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe introduced the programme and responded to queries raised during its consideration by the Committee.

Discussion

3. Several delegations emphasized the importance of the work of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in support of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the region. A delegation observed the growing importance of regional commissions in advancing progress on sustainable development and the overall improvement of quality of life and welcomed the invaluable contribution of ECE in various policy areas. A delegation noted that ECE represented the only universal active platform for economic development in the region. A delegation also remarked on references made to Central Asia in the programme and sought clarification on the delineation of the



work of ECE, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. A delegation observed that the programme would promote technical cooperation with economies in transition, aimed at achieving sustainable development across the region. Another delegation expressed the importance of all the subprogrammes and indicated that its Government would actively participate in their implementation.

4. Some delegations emphasized the importance of fully achieving the vision of the Secretary-General's reform agenda to reduce duplication and focus on areas of comparative advantage. Regional architecture should be streamlined where possible, to ensure that United Nations country teams are fully supported so they can assist in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

5. Regarding inter-agency cooperation and strategic partnership with other United Nations entities, a question was raised concerning the partnership with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in particular to request more details on collaboration with the Secretariat entity upholding the development pillar.

6. With regard to paragraph 20.16 in the section on strategy and external factors for 2020 in the outline of the overall orientation of the programme, a delegation noted that the programme would promote interregional cooperation, including South-South and triangular cooperation, and was of the view that North-South cooperation should also be reflected. In that regard, the delegation enquired as to how the 2020 programme plan would encourage developed countries to honour their official development assistance commitments.

7. A delegation expressed the view that the use of statistics on adopted legal instruments as a measure of performance was not proof, in and of itself, of the achievement of results and suggested that more examples of specific projects should be provided when quoting numbers of legal instruments.

8. A delegation expressed the view that the support provided to women, and specifically women entrepreneurs in Central Asia, was welcomed, but it did not see the need to involve women in all activities of the programme, which may involve difficult work, in order to achieve a gender balance. Another delegation remarked that the programme only referenced the gender perspective in two subprogrammes, namely subprogramme 6, Trade, and subprogramme 8, Housing, land management and population. The delegation further remarked that the alignment of the programme with Sustainable Development Goal 5, on achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, should be viewed more generally in terms of "linkages", as opposed to an "alignment".

9. A delegation underlined the importance of subprogramme 2, Transport, and noted the significant volume of technical regulations approved by Member States on ECE initiatives and on efforts to achieve regional harmonization. A question was also raised concerning the plans to achieve greater road safety and on whether any work would be done in the area of vehicle automation.

10. With regard to subprogramme 3, Statistics, a question was raised concerning the theme of statistics and why the term "disaggregated data" did not appear in the proposed programme plan, even though it was mentioned in the *Road Map on Statistics for Sustainable Development Goals* of the Conference of European Statisticians and in the guidance on common elements of statistical legislation. A question was also raised as to what extent ECE was involved in the upgrading of tier II and tier III Sustainable Development Goal indicators and whether there were particular indicators that could be expected to shift from tier III to tier II or from tier II to tier I in the near future. A delegation referenced the highlighted result in 2018 and noted that Eastern European countries had been the first to request the

development of international guidance on statistical legislation, which had led to the Generic Law on Official Statistics, endorsed by the chief statisticians of 65 countries. The delegation further remarked that the Armenia, Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Moldova had been the first countries to modernize their legal frameworks for statistics in accordance with the Generic Law.

11. Regarding subprogramme 4, Economic cooperation and integration, a delegation recognized the efforts of ECE to promote innovation, competitiveness and public-private partnerships and sought clarification on the global technology facilitation mechanism, including the parameters relating to the mechanism. On the subject of people-first public-private partnerships, championed by ECE and other regional commissions, and in view of the 2030 Agenda, the delegation welcomed the adopted broader concept of public-private partnerships that went beyond value for money and towards value for people. The delegation questioned how ECE would use the resources at its disposal in helping other regional commissions to promote ECE-developed public-private partnership standards.

12. Clarification was sought on subprogramme 5, Sustainable energy, with regards to whether ECE could confirm that 2020 would be a reasonable deadline for the envisaged adoption of guidance on extending the life of nuclear power plants.

13. Delegations expressed its appreciation for the efforts made by ECE under subprogramme 8, Housing, land management and population. A delegation highlighted that the expanded use of the Active Ageing Index had helped to address the key issue of demography in Europe and Central Asia and queried whether the subprogramme would develop concrete measures that could reverse demographic trends. A delegation further expressed support for the use of the Index by civil society organizations in order to raise awareness of the contributions of older persons to society.
