

UNESCAP 66th Session
13–19 May 2010
Incheon, Republic of Korea

The Ministry of Finance (MoF) of the Government of the Democratic Republic of Timor–Leste took part in the 66th session of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission (UNESCAP) hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea and Incheon Metropolitan City held at the Songdo Convensia A, from 13–19 May 2010. The MoF was represented by Mr. Felix Piedade from the MDGs Secretariat.

The Commission session comprised of two segments:

1. SENIOR OFFICIALS SEGMENT, 13–15 MAY 2010

The segment was officially opened by Minister for Trade, Republic of Korea, H.E. Kim Jong–hoon, accompanied by UN Under Executive Secretary and also the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Dr. Noeleen Heyzar.

Following events were held during the Senior Official Segments:

a) Committee of the Whole I, 13 –15 May:

Presentation of a resolution, sponsored by the Government of Vanuatu on the Five year review of the Mauritius strategy for the further implementation of the Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The Commission generally endorsed the Port Vila Outcome Statement as the Asia–Pacific regional inputs to the global review of the Mauritius Strategy.

The committee also reviewed Substantive Issues as following:

▪Macro–economic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development

The Committee reviewed on the Brussels Program of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001–2010. The committee generally endorsed the Dhaka outcome and requested the Executive Secretary to transmit it as the Asia Pacific inputs into the 4th UN conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, in May 2011.

▪Trade and Investment

The Committee noted the strong link between trade and investment, in particular foreign direct investment. It called for synergies between domestic and foreign investment, in particular through the coordination of national development and

investment policies and strategies. In that regard, it noted the important role of public-private partnership.

▪Transport

The Committee recognized the crucial role of transport and connectivity in promoting sustainable economic and social development, reducing poverty and improving the general welfare of people. The committee also noted the importance of transport facilitation for connectivity and the development transit corridor that involved removal of non physical border, streamlining of customs procedure and simplification of formalities in border crossing.

▪Environment and Development

The Committee recognized the important role of regional cooperation in addressing environment and development issues and took the view that further cooperation with other international organizations and international financial institutions was needed in order to strengthen efforts toward economic development, social progress and environmental sustainability.

b) Committee of the Whole II, 13-15 May:

Reviewed of Substantive Issues as per following:

▪Information and Communication Technology

The Committee noted that information and technology (ICT) formed an important foundation for socio-economic development and disaster risk reduction. In addition to recognizing the work of the secretariat in providing policy options and assisting in the implementation of policies aimed at bringing the digital divide as well as efforts to achieve the MDGs.

▪Disaster risk reduction

The Committee noted with satisfaction the activities of secretariat aimed at reducing disaster risk in the Asia pacific region and emphasized the importance with cooperation with other organization, including the inter agency secretariat of the international strategy for disaster reduction to avoid duplication. It was also

noted that ESCAP should work closely with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) toward disaster risk reduction.

▪Social Development

The Committee reaffirmed the importance of social development in the regional efforts to achieve inclusive and sustainable development. It expressed strong support for the work of the secretariat in that area and called for it to be further strengthened. The committee also noted the impact of economic crisis in the region, particularly on the most vulnerable social groups.

▪Statistics Institution for Asia Pacific (SIAP)

The Committee emphasized the importance of statistic development in the region through methodological work and technical cooperation on increasing capacity for collecting data and producing, analyzing and disseminating statistic and indicator in support of evidence-based policy formulation, the analysis of development trends and the monitoring of progress in achieving development goals.

▪Sub regional activities for development

The Committee welcomed the establishment of the sub regional office for East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia, and South and South-West Asia, which as an integral part of ESCAP, would address different development priorities in each sub region, promote sub regional cooperation for advancing sustainable development and enhance the visibility of the commission's work.

The Committee of the Whole II also looked at the Management Issues such as:

▪ Evaluations of APCICT and SIAP

The Committee expressed appreciation for the achievements and relevance of the Asian and Pacific training center for Information and Communication Technology for development (APCICT) and its full support for the continues operation of APCICT in line with its established principles. The Committee also acknowledged the strategic importance of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP). It encouraged the use of the report and its recommendation in further guiding the work of SIAP, especially by the Governing Council of SIAP.

During the session, an election was conducted for the members of the Governing Council for SIAP for the term of 2010–2015. Eight countries were elected to the members including Thailand, Korea, China, Indonesia, India, Malaysia, Australia and Pakistan.

▪Program changes for biennium 2010–2011

The Committee was informed that the proposed program changes would contribute to the achievement of the expected accomplishment and had no additional regular program budget implication for the biennium 2010–2011. Those program changes had been endorsed by the committee at the 66th session.

▪Draft Strategic Framework for the biennium 2012–2013

The Committee was informed that the draft strategic framework for the period 2012–2013 had been developed through close partnership between the secretariat and member states, building on the mission of ESCAP to promote regional cooperation and collective action to achieve a more inclusive and sustainable future for the people of Asia and the Pacific. Noted the importance of achieving MDGs in Asia and the Pacific and the need to address challenges related to aid effectiveness, the committee endorsed the draft strategic framework for the biennium 2012–2013.

▪Technical cooperation activities of ESCAP & announcement of intended contributions

The Committee was informed that the secretariat had received new contribution for technical cooperation activities in 2009 from the regular budget as well voluntary source that had amounted to approximately \$15.8 million, with a total of technical cooperation delivery of 19.6 million. The committee also noted that following countries had announced and notified secretariat in writing that they will contribute to the following amounts to regional institutions for the period from April 2010 to March 2011:

- ❖ Bangladesh – US\$ 27,000
- ❖ China – US\$ 1,6 million
- ❖ India – US\$ 850,750

- ❖ Indonesia – US\$ 372,900
- ❖ Japan – US\$ 3 million
- ❖ Macao, China – US\$ 31,000
- ❖ Malaysia – US\$ 45,000
- ❖ Mongolia – US\$ 5,000
- ❖ Pakistan – US\$ 22,500
- ❖ Philippines – US\$ 83,000
- ❖ Republic of Korea – US\$ 3.5 million
- ❖ Russia Federation – US\$ 1.2 million
- ❖ Thailand – US\$ 117,000

▪Activities of ACPR

Since the 66th session of the commission, ACPR (Advisory Committee of Permanent Representative) has held six regular sessions, two special session and four meetings of the informal working group on draft resolutions. The ACPR had reviewed the draft strategic framework for ESCAP for the biennium 2012–2013 and provided suggestion for changes that had been presented to the commission.

▪Dates, Venue and theme topic for the next 67th session in 2011

The Committee decided to hold its 67th session in Bangkok in April/May 2011. The exact date would be determined in consultation with the ACPR and other representative designated by members of the commission. Taking into consideration the wide preferences indicated by countries, the committee endorsed **“Beyond the crises: long term perspective on social protection and development”** as the theme topic for the coming session, with consideration of the economic aspects of social protection. Given the importance of regional integration and connectivity, the committee invited the secretariat to provide further analysis of that topic, in particular through the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific.

2. MINISTERIAL SEGMENT DURING 17–19 MAY 2010

The segment was officially opened by Minister for Trade, Republic of Korea, H.E. Kim Jong-hoon, accompanied by UN Under Executive Secretary and also the Executive Secretary of ESCAP, Dr. Noeleen Heyzar, President of Kiribati, H.E. Mr. Atone Tong, Prime Minister of Vanuatu, H.E. Mr. Edward Nipake Natapei, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina and Acting Mayor of Incheon Metropolitan City.

The following events were also held during the Ministerial Segment:

- a). A Ministerial Round Table on the theme of the 66th session “Supportive Financial System and Green Growth for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the Asia Pacific Region”.

The Committee noted that the impact of the crisis would make it more difficult for many countries in the Asia and the Pacific region to achieve MDGs goals by 2015, as it was home to close a billion people living in poverty and was prone to natural disaster. The Committee also noted with concern that many countries in the region were not on track to achieve all of MDGs goals by 2015. In particular, LDCs, landlocked developing countries and Small Island Developing States were constrained by many critical factors, such as the lack of adequate financial resource, technical know-how and human resource capacity, which were as obstacles for the implementation of programs and activities related to MDGs. Those countries were also marginalized in international trade because of their limited supply capabilities, poor infrastructure, and restrictive rule in existing international trade arrangements, and the erosion of trade preferences.

The Committee was informed that the Government of Indonesia will hold a Special Ministerial meeting to review the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific in Jakarta on August 2010, the outcome of which would be submitted to the UN High Level Plenary meeting on the MDG summit, which will be held in New York in September 2010.

- b). A High Level Panel on “Sustaining the Recovery and Dynamism for inclusive Development” at _____ (there are some info missing in here?) on Tuesday, 18 May 2010

The high level panel on the economic crisis focused on the policy challenges the region faced as it led the economy recovery in recovery from the global financial crisis. The panelists were:

1. H.E. Mr. Nickel Lee Hang, Minister of Finance, Samoa
2. H.E. Ms. Shahnaz Wazir Ali, Adviser to the Prime Minister, Pakistan
3. Mr. Cheick Sidi Diarra, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the LDCs, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.
4. Mr. C. Lawrence Greenwood, Vice-President, ADB

Mr. Nickel was of the view that a sustained recovery of the current rebound in economic growth being experienced in the Asia-Pacific region would require a balancing of relations to a fairer and more equitable process of development. In that regard, Pacific-Islands developing countries continue to suffer from a number of development gaps linked to smallness, isolation and growing ecological and human vulnerabilities. Finally, he underlined the need for broad-based consultation to achieve a consensus for changes for the better. Initiatives for regional connectivity needed to be underpinned by social connectivity.

Ms. Shahnaz was of the view that south Asian sub region had in recent years experienced success and breakthrough with policy approaches founded on an integrated human development paradigm, placing social capital as the fundamental driver of economic transformation. There remain policy gaps in the principle, design and delivery of social policies. Social exclusion appeared particularly tenacious in Asia and was due to a host factors, including poverty, inequity, political instability and injustice. The call for political commitment to ensure education and health for all had brought about substantial progress in South Asia.

Mr. Cheick emphasized that although the region as a whole had recovered well from the crisis, the picture was very different for LDCs, landlocked countries and small island developing states: for those countries, the crisis persisted and had exacerbated the considerable challenges they faced in meeting the MDGs. For some of those countries, trade had collapsed, which had decreased employment in export-oriented industries, and decreased government revenue, leading to constraint social spending. The crisis had illustrated the need for many of those countries to move away from a growth model of dependence on exporting natural resource through the diversification of exports products and move up in the value chain.

Mr. Lawrence underlined that while region had demonstrated its resilience during the crisis and the ongoing recovery, sustainable growth in the region would require the rebalancing of economies in favor of domestic and regional consumption. Among the strategies to promote such rebalancing were:

- Macroeconomic policies such as a return to prudent fiscal and monetary policies.
- Increasing domestic and regional demand by removing distortions that favored exports, boosting the service sector, and increasing incentives for green economy initiatives.
- Enhancing social policies by increasing formal social safety nets
- Financial sector reform, through banking reforms and development of bonds market.
- Regional cooperation and integration through, among other things, improving connectivity, cooperation in crisis prevention and exchange rate flexibility and cooperation.

c). Adoption of 15 Resolutions

The Committee at the end of its meeting on Wednesday, 19 May 2010 adopted 15 different resolutions as follows:

1. **Incheon Declaration.**

Some highlights of the Declaration were as follows:

- Member and associate members of UNESCAP who have gathered in Incheon express appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Korea and Incheon Metropolitan City for hosting the present session.
- The members welcomed the efforts of countries in the region, especially the developing countries, which have made good progress towards achieving MDGs, while remaining concerned that the region is still vulnerable to setbacks in achieving them.
- The members emphasized the need for stronger regional cooperation, which could make the region more resilient to future crises and bolster the capacity of countries in the region to achieve the MDGs.
- The members are convinced that green growth is one of the elements that creates synergies in the pursuit of the MDGs by harmonizing efforts to achieve environmental sustainability (MDG Goal 7), including poverty alleviation (Goal 1), by providing new opportunities to achieve economic growth and generate jobs.

2. Five-year review of the Mauritius Strategy for the further Implementation of the Program of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recalled that the Mauritius Strategy, adopted in January 2005, is the global strategy for addressing the vulnerabilities of small islands developing states.
- Requested the Executive Secretary to ensure that the activities of the Commission will take into account the special needs of the small island developing states and to review , analyze and disseminate information, as appropriate, on economic and social development in small island developing states, in line with the Mauritius Strategy.
- Noted the commitment of the Pacific Island developing states to undertake strong actions at the national and regional levels to further advanced the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy.
- Welcomed the support provided by ESCAP for Asia and the Pacific, and the Council of Regional Organizations for the preparation and convening of the Pacific High-level dialogue for the Five-Year Review of the Mauritius Strategy, hosted by the Government of Vanuatu in February 2010.

3. Implementation of the Dhaka Outcome Document on the Brussels Program of Action for Least Developed Countries.

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recalled the 2005 World Summit outcome, General Assembly resolution 63/239 of 24 December 2009 on the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development.
- Took into note the Ministerial Declaration of the LDC countries, adopted in New York on 29 September 2008.
- Requested the Executive Secretary to assist Asia-Pacific LDCs, in forwarding the Dhaka outcome document as the Asia-Pacific regional inputs to the 4th UN conference on LDCs, to be held in Istanbul, Turkey in 2011, and to submit to the Commission at its 67th session a report on the progress achieved in the implementation of the present resolution.

4. Implementation of the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia.

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Welcomed the successful outcome of the 1st session of the Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport, held in Bangkok from 14–18 December 2009, which adopted the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia.
- Recognized that vast numbers of people in rural areas have limited access to transport infrastructure and services and, consequently, to economic and social opportunities.
- Requested the Executive Secretary to continue to accord priority to the implementation of the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (phase I, 2007–2011).

5. Implementation of the Jakarta Declaration on Public–Private Partnership for Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific.

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recognized that inadequate infrastructure facilities and services have strong adverse effects on the movement of goods and services, production and transaction costs.
- Welcomed the offer from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to host the 3rd Ministerial conference on Public–Private Partnership for Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific.
- Requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with UN bodies and specialized agencies to assist members and associate members in meeting infrastructure development challenges through regional and interregional cooperation and the organizing of meetings and regional networking arrangements aimed at promoting the exchange of experiences and information.

6. Improving Road safety in Asia and the Pacific.

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Welcomed the recommendations of the ESCAP Expert Group meeting on improving road safety, held in Bangkok from 2 to 4 September 2009, in

which particularly noted the usefulness of compiling a guideline outlining best practice in road safety improvement in the region.

- Recognized that road safety is a public policy issue of major concern that requires a strong political commitment and effective interventions to significantly reduce road traffic fatalities, injuries and related human suffering.
- Requested the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with UN regional commissions, partners in the UN Road Safety to prepare an implementation plan for the Asia-Pacific region to be presented as a regional inputs to the Decade of Action for Road safety and to develop, in consultation with the members and associate members of the Commission, a set of regional goals, targets and indicators, to be achieved by 2020 in order to assess and evaluate road safety progress.

7. Pacific Urban Agenda

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recognized the Goals contained in the UN Millennium Declaration relating to poverty in particular goal 1, halving the number of poor by 2015, and goal 7, significant improvement in the lives of 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.
- Requested the Executive Secretary to support members and associate members in assessing progress in implementing the Pacific Urban Agenda, to convene a sub regional workshop in the biennium 2010-2011 for exchange of experience and capacity building requirements and to report to the Commission at its 68th session on the outcome of this exercise.

8. Review of the proposal for the establishment of the Asia Pacific center for information, communication and space technology-enable disaster management in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recalled its resolution 65/5 of 29 April 2009, in which noted that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran had requested additional time in order to provide the Commission with the supplementary information requested.

- Invited the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to provide information requested and to consider revising its draft resolution, in consultation with the secretariat, for submission to the Commission for consideration at its 67th session.
- Requested the Executive Secretary to provide the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran with technical assistance, if requested, in the review of the operational details of the proposal.

9. Full and effective implementation of Beijing Platform for Action and its regional and global outcome in the Asia Pacific Region

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recalled the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the outcome of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly.
- Welcomed the Declaration on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the 4th World Conference on Women adopted at the 54th session of the commission on the status of women.
- Requested the Executive Secretary to strengthen the role of the Commission in supporting members and associate members in implementing Beijing Platform for Action, as well as the outcome of the 23rd special session on the general assembly, to take actions set out in the Bangkok Declaration on Beijing+15.

10. Regional call for Action to achieve universal access to HIV protection, treatment, care and support in Asia and the Pacific.

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recalled the General Assembly resolution 60/262 of 2 June 2006, by which the Assembly adopted the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, and scaling up significantly national efforts to achieve the goal of universal access to comprehensive prevention programs, treatment, care and support by 2010.
- Called upon all members and associate members to accelerate the implementation of the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS adopted by the General Assembly at its 60th session and to reinforce commitments to the MDGs target of universal access to treatment for HIV and AIDS.

- Requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Joint UN programs on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), WHO and other relevant stakeholder to support members in the implementation of the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS and in reaching the MDGs and to report to the commission at its 68th session on the progress in the implementation of the present resolution.

11.Regional preparation for the High–level intergovernmental meeting on the Final review of the Implementation of the Action and Pacific Decade of Disable Persons, 2003–2012.

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recalled the Convention on the Rights of persons with disabilities, adopted by the General Assembly on 13 December 2006.
- Noted that the Commission, in its resolution 65/3, welcomed the offer of the Republic of Korea to host the High Level Intergovernmental Meeting in 2012.
- Requested the Executive Secretary to encourage the participation of all key stakeholders, including organizations of persons with disabilities from Asia and the Pacific and also request the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission at its 69th session on the implementation of the present resolution.

12.Sixth Asian and Pacific Population Conference

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Took note of the Asia Pacific High–level Forum Declaration on Population and Development: 15th years after Cairo, adopted at the Asia–Pacific High–Level Forum on ICPD.
- Called upon countries in the Asian and Pacific region to commit themselves to fully implementing the Program of Action of the International conference on Population and Development.
- Requested the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with UNFPA and other relevant UN organizations to convene 6th Asian and Pacific Population Conference in Bangkok in 2012 and to report to the Commission at its 69th session on the progress of the present resolution.

13.Strengthening regional cooperation in North and Central Asia

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recalled its resolution 63/5 on the midterm review of the implementation of the Almaty Program of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing countries.
- Welcomed the outcome of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Meeting on the New ESCAP sub regional office for East and North-East Asia, North and Central Asia, and South and South-West Asia which was held in Bangkok from 2 to 4 March 2010.
- Requested the Executive Secretary to implement the Almaty Plan of Action: Addressing the Special Needs of Landlocked Developing Countries within a New Global Framework for Transit Transport Cooperation for Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries.

14.Continuation of the Asian and Pacific Training Center for Information and Communication Technology for Development

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Recalled its resolution 61/6 of 18 May 2005 on the establishment of the Asian and Pacific Training Center for ICT for development.
- Decided that the center should continue to operate beyond 2011 as a subsidiary body of the commission, based on the statute of the Centre, to strengthen the human and institutional capacities of members in the use of ICT to support inclusive and sustainable economic and social development.
- Called upon all members to support the efforts of the center aimed at strengthening sub regional and regional cooperation in ICT through the sharing of information, experience, knowledge and resource.
- Requested the Executive Secretary to take all steps necessary for the implementation of the present resolution and to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission at its 68th session.

15. Strengthening of the evaluation function of the secretariat of the commission.

Some of its important points were as follows:

- Took note of the reports on evaluation activities of ESCAP and its regional institutes during the biennium 2008–2009
- Commented (or Commended?) on the Executive Secretary for her commitment to continue to strengthen the evaluation function of the secretariat
- Requested the Executive Secretary to ensure the programmatic work of secretariat, including the work of divisions, sub regional office and regional institutions, is evaluated periodically and also to submit to the Commission at its 67th session a plan for the above-mentioned session.

These two segments were attended by some 300 delegates from 43 countries including 1 President, 2 Prime Ministers, 12 Ministers and 4 Vice Ministers, and around 8 international organization/bodies. Following is the list of the high level officials who attended the meetings:

No	Name	Position	Countries
1.	H.E. Mr. Atone Tong,	President	Kiribati,
2.	H.E. Mr. Edward Nipake Natapei,	Prime Minister	Vanuatu
3.	H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina	Prime Minister,	Bangladesh
4.	H.E. Mr. Abdul Hadi Arghandewal	Minister of Economic Affairs	Afghanistan
5.	H.E. Mr. Abul Maal	Minister of Finance	Bangladesh
6.	H.E. Mr. Ly Thuch	Senior Minister, Council of Minister	Cambodia
7.	H.E. Mr. Ratu Inoke Kubuabola	Minister of Foreign Affairs	Fiji
8.	H.E. Ms. Armida Alisjahbana	Minister of National Development Planning	Indonesia
9.	H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid	Minister of State for Housing, Transport & Environment	Maldives
10.	H.E. Mr. Sali Subam	Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration	PNG

11.	H.E. Mr. Kim Jong-hoon	Minister of Trade, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade	Korea
12.	H.E. Mr. Nickel Lee Hang	Minister of Finance	Samoa
13.	H.E. Mr. Ped Shanel Agovaka	Minister of Commerce, Industries, Labor and Immigration	Solomon Island
14.	H.E. Mr. Panich Vikitsreth	Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs	Thailand
15.	H.E. Mr. Lotoala Metia	Minister of Finance & Economic Planning	Tuvalu
16.	H.E. Mr. Doan Xuan Hung	Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs	Vietnam

Next Steps:

The Government of Indonesia to host the Special Meeting for the Review of the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific: Run Up to 2015 in Jakarta on 3 and 4 August 2010. The event will serve as the Asia-Pacific preparatory meeting for the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly during its 66th session on September 2010 in New York. The High-Level Plenary meeting shall focus on accelerating progress towards the achievement of all the MDGs by 2015.

Meanwhile, the 67th session of the UNESCAP will be held on May 2011 in Bangkok. Each member-country will be expected to report on their progress in the various sectors including the MDG as per the coming agenda.