



**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**Introduction of the Secretary-General's Report on  
"Regional cooperation in the economic, social and related fields (E/2023/15)"**

**Statement by Ms. Yera Ortiz de Urbina, Deputy Director and OiC,  
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**25 July 2023**

Madame Chair, Ambassador Paula Narváez, PR of Chile to the UN,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

I have the honour, on behalf of the Regional Commissions, of introducing the Secretary-General's report on regional cooperation contained in document E/2023/15 and its Addendum. The report provides an update on regional approaches to critical global issues as well as an overview of work done by the Regional Commissions during the reporting period.

Excellencies,

The global economy is experiencing a slowdown in activity and high inflation, while facing the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, pollution and other forms of environmental degradation, deepening inequalities, rising geopolitical tensions and conflicts, and the erosion of global norms and institutions. This confluence of challenges is undermining global solidarity and trust and, as repeatedly stated during the just concluded High Level Political Forum, jeopardizing the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The impact and lingering effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continue also to be felt across all regions.



In this context, guided by the outcomes of key global and regional conferences, the regional commissions continue to leverage their role as thought leaders and convening platforms to advance regional action on the Sustainable Development Goals, generating knowledge and data, providing a bridge to support effective country-level action in key areas such as financing, the digital and energy transition and climate action and increasing political momentum towards the SDG Summit.

Excellencies,

The Secretary-General's report is presented in two parts. The **first part of the report** updates on the state of progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda across the five regions. It also illustrates the work of the regional commissions at the regional, subregional, cross-border and country levels to support countries to move from risk to resilience and achieve a more sustainable and equitable future.

The **second part of the report** provides an overview of regional and interregional initiatives spearheaded by the regional commissions and outlines policy matters addressed by them, including through the regional forums on sustainable development, as well as actions taken to fully implement the repositioning of the United Nations development system, in particular the regional reform.

Allow me to highlight some examples of achievements registered by the Regional Commissions around four broad thematic areas, as evidenced in the report before you.

In the area of **financing sustainable recovery and resilience**, ECA coordinated the work of the high-level working group on the global financial architecture,



comprising African ministers of finance, planning and economic development, the African Union, key regional banks, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, thereby establishing a robust advocacy and coordination platform that, amongst other, called on the Group of 20 to advance the debt sustainability agenda. Other examples of innovations include the work on Climate/Sustainable Development Goals Debt Swap Mechanism in the Arab and the Asia Pacific regions and the provision of technical assistance to several Asia-Pacific Governments in the area of green bonds.

As regards the challenge of **energy security and sustainability**, ECLAC has been carrying out thematic studies and technical cooperation activities with the countries of the “lithium triangle”, comprising Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Chile. UNECE for its part has continued to enhance its work on energy efficiency to support the implementation of the Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings, as well as on digitalization.

In the area of **environmental protection and food systems transformation**, allow me to highlight ESCWA’s work in partnership with the League of Arab States and other regional organizations on regional water and food security policies. Another example, in the Asia-Pacific region, under the auspices of ESCAP, countries agreed on the Regional Action Programme on Air Pollution as a comprehensive framework for cooperation to improve air quality management. And ECE has continued to advance cooperation under the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes.

Finally, as regards promoting **digital cooperation in support of the SDGs**, several Regional Commissions have facilitated the establishment of regional frameworks and agendas. For example, ECA’s support to the data policy framework



of the African Union; the development by ESCWA of the Arab Digital Agenda 2023–2033, or ECLAC’s support for the adoption the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean for 2022–2024 last November.

For more details, in addition to the SG’s report on regional cooperation, I encourage Member States to refer to the Summaries of the Work of the Regional Commissions submitted as part of the official documentation today.

Madame Chair,  
Excellencies.

As per established procedure, the Addendum to the report contains information on resolutions and decisions adopted by the five Regional Commissions’ sessions. In the informal briefing to the Council that your Excellency convened on 26 June 2023, I presented a detailed overview of the outcomes of the sessions that took place during the reporting period and presented for member States consideration today. [This includes six resolutions for endorsement, including Djibouti’s membership to ESCWA, a resolution on the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning adopted at ECA’s 55<sup>th</sup> session, and four resolutions adopted at ECE’s 70<sup>th</sup> session, on Best Practice Guidance for Effective Management of Coal Mine Methane at National level, on the UN Resource Management Principles and Requirements, on strengthening the role of the secretariat for building resilient energy systems and modernizing resource management systems, and on implementation of the rapid response mechanism under the Aarhus convention].

Madame Chair,  
Excellencies,

To conclude, as the current ECOSOC cycle winds down and a new cycle is about to begin, I wish to reaffirm, on behalf of the Regional Commissions, our commitment



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to improved coordination, coherent and impactful delivery of our work, to support countries and regions in the advancement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

Thank you for your attention.

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