

**1998/4. Strengthening regional support for persons with disabilities into the twenty-first century**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its decision 1992/289 of 31 July 1992 on the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993–2002,

*Noting* the implementation efforts made during the first half of the Decade by many countries and areas in the Asia and Pacific region, including progress in the adoption of equalization legislation, as well as the intercountry meetings hosted by the Governments of India, Japan, Malaysia and the Philippines on critical issues in the implementation of the Agenda for Action for the Asian and Pacific Decade of

Disabled Persons, 1993–2002<sup>9</sup> related to assistive devices, non-handicapping environments, multisectoral collaboration and national coordination,

*Welcoming* the Seoul proposals for the second half of the Decade, adopted by the Meeting of Senior Officials to Mark the Mid-point of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993–2002, hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea in September 1997,<sup>10</sup>

*Expressing its appreciation* to the Subcommittee on Disability-related Concerns of the Regional Inter-Agency Committee for Asia and the Pacific for pioneering collaborative inter-organizational action for the Decade,

*Noting* the need for a stronger regional impetus to support national and local endeavours in the second half of the Decade,

1. *Requests* the General Assembly to endorse the present resolution and to encourage intergovernmental organizations to support its implementation in order to assist in addressing equalization issues faced by the majority of the world's disabled persons, including disabled women and children, who live in the Asia and Pacific region;

2. *Urges* all members and associate members of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific:

(a) To intensify multisectoral collaborative action towards the fulfilment of the targets for the implementation of the Agenda for Action for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993–2002, adopted by the Commission at its forty-ninth session, in April 1993;<sup>11</sup>

(b) To contribute to the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific technical cooperation trust fund for the Decade to meet capacity-building needs for information and technical assistance in multisectoral collaboration among diverse sectors, in support of the fulfilment of the targets for the Decade;

3. *Urges* all Governments that have not yet signed the Proclamation on the Full Participation and Equality of People with Disabilities in the Asian and Pacific Region<sup>12</sup> to do so before the next regional meeting to review the progress of the Decade, to be held in 1999;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific to strengthen secretariat assistance to members and associate members by taking the following action:

(a) Harnessing the multidisciplinary potential of the secretariat of the Commission to enhance sensitivity to disabilities – that is, by the inclusion of persons with disabilities and/or the consideration of the impact thereof on disability-related concerns – as a performance criterion of the secretariat's overall technical assistance, on a par with other

<sup>9</sup> E/ESCAP/902, annex II.

<sup>10</sup> For the text, see the ESCAP web site (<http://www.unescap.org/decade/seoul.htm>).

<sup>11</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No. 16 (E/1993/36)*, chap. IV, resolution 49/6.

<sup>12</sup> E/ESCAP/902, annex I.

criteria, such as gender sensitivity and relevance to development needs in the countries and areas of the region;

(b) Examining resource allocations within the secretariat with a view to undertaking the adjustments required to enhance secretariat support for disability-related action;

(c) Mobilizing resources to replenish continually the technical cooperation trust fund for the purposes of documentation, exchanges and field visits and to disseminate good practices in the implementation of the Agenda for Action, giving special attention to the enhancement of knowledge and skills among persons with disabilities and the equal participation of disabled women and girls;

(d) Generating practical guidelines for advancing equal access by disabled persons to mainstream development opportunities by organizing and following up two regional meetings in 1999, in close collaboration with other members of the Subcommittee on Disability-related Concerns of the Regional Inter-Agency Committee for Asia and the Pacific, on the following topics:

- (i) Education and technology for the specific needs of disabled children and youth;
- (ii) Implementation of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities<sup>13</sup> and fulfilment of the targets for the Decade;

(e) Exploring the means of organizing, by the end of 2002, a high-level regional meeting to consider the lessons learned from national and area efforts towards the fulfilment of the targets for the Decade, so as to lay a solid foundation for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in mainstream society into the twenty-first century;

5. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Commission biennially on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution, with emphasis on follow-up action to reinforce the impact of the above-mentioned regional meetings, and to submit recommendations to the Commission, as required, concerning continuous secretariat action to improve the opportunities for persons with disabilities to participate in the development process, until 2003, when the overall endeavours of the Decade will be reviewed as a separate agenda item at the fifty-ninth session of the Commission, to provide a basis for further action in the new millennium.

*35th plenary meeting  
20 July 1998*

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<sup>13</sup> General Assembly resolution 48/96, annex.