



# ESCWA Kicks Off Third Technical Committee, 35th Anniversary Celebrations



Lebanese Foreign Minister Fawzi Salloukh, representing President Michel Suleiman, alongside UN Under-Secretary-General and ESCWA Executive Secretary Bader AlDafa, opened on 21 July the third meeting of the ESCWA Technical Committee in its Beirut headquarters, a meeting dedicated to the financial crisis, food security, climate change and other issues.

In the opening session, also dedicated to the launching of celebrations for ESCWA 35th Anniversary, AlDafa said this anniversary is a proclamation of “our adherence to ESCWA’s mission of fostering development cooperation in a time of conflict, a consecration of dialogue in a time of violence and a commitment to preserving

the local character of our region in the midst of globalization”. AlDafa underlined ESCWA’s achievements, not the least of all was overcoming the difficulties it has faced, such as its repetitive relocations between different capitals as a consequence of war and conflict.

AlDafa thanked President Suleiman for taking the event under his patronage for his continuous support to the Regional Commission and the unique position it occupies in the region.

For his part, Minister Salloukh praised “ESCWA’s strong and diverse efforts since its establishment in 1973 to promote economic and social development in Western Asia”, noting “the vital role the Commission



has played since its inception, and the power it has to overcome difficult regional circumstances that came in parallel to its launching in Beirut, where it stood its ground until its forced relocation as a result of the Israeli invasion in 1982 to Baghdad, which it left in 1991 to Amman before finally returning to settle in its home town Beirut in 1997”. Political instability and security tensions did not break down the Com-

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## ESCWA Launches New Document Control System

ESCWA launched a new electronic system to monitor the internal flow of documents, from start to finish. Dubbed Document Control System (DCS), the new tool replaces the “do-it-yourself” system, organizing the submission, approval and processing of documents/publications while ensuring the compliance with rules and regulations.

Speaking at the launch of the new system, ESCWA Executive Secretary Bader AlDafa said the DCS will streamline document processing at ESCWA and described the implementation of DCS as an opportunity for improvement. AlDafa commended ESCWA’s Admin-

## ESCWA Kicks Off Third Technical Committee, 35th Anniversary Celebrations (Cont.)

mission’s will, and instead pushed it closer to the issues of our Arab region and made it more perceptive of its peoples’ suffering.

“ESCWA is an additional element in the promotion of common Arab work”, Sallouk said, pointing out the commitment to efficiency and flexibility in always being on top of world changes that governs the work of ESCWA, and which made its Session held in 2006, in Beirut, establish the Technical Committee that chose to deal in its present meeting with urgent issues such as the financial crisis, food security, and the climate change and its repercussions.

Minister Salloukh announced as well Lebanon’s candidacy for the non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council for the period 2010-2011 as representative of the Arab group, adding: “we hope to be



able to reflect our region’s issues, express our peoples’ concerns, and serve the stability and prosperity of our countries as well as the cause of just and comprehensive peace”.

The third speaker at the ceremony was the Under-Secretary of the Yemeni Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation Muhammad Ahmad Al-Hawri, who delivered an opening statement in his capacity as Chairman of the present session of the Technical Committee. Al-Hawri praised the great role ESCWA continues to play in the service of its countries’ economic and social development, particularly in Yemen, “where it was

an efficient partner in several programs and projects that aim to strengthen human development on both economic and social levels”.

Shortly before the opening, Executive Secretary Bader AlDafa visited the tomb of late Lebanese Prime Minister Rafic Hariri to pay tribute to the man behind ESCWA’s return to Beirut, its official and permanent seat.

At the end of the opening ceremony for the Technical Committee, an oriental musique de chambre concert was held, followed by a reception for guests and staff. ■

## ESCWA Launches New Document Control System (Cont.)

istration and its Conference Service Section (CSS) for following this project through and ensuring its accomplishment.

The system will be in place for a trial period until the end of the year.

“DCS is the perfect example of inter-agency collaboration”, said Issa Toubbeh, Chief, Meeting and Publishing Unit in CSS. Toubbeh gave a brief presentation on the history of the system, saying it was implemented upon a recommendation from UN auditors a couple of years back. The UN Office in Geneva then offered to assist ESCWA in replacing the old manual system with a new electronic one. All UN document control systems were tested, and the final package was a customized one, particularly designed for ESCWA. The



ESCWA DCS is user-friendly and allows staff to follow up on their documents step by step. “I wish to thank all those who contributed to the project, from ESCWA ASD and CSS to the UN in Geneva for their precious contribution and support”, added Toubbeh who will be retiring shortly after a long service with the UN. “I leave with peace of mind knowing I have accomplished my task on DCS in the best possible way,” he said. ■

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