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Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing (PWG-TBC)

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Identification, isolation and elimination of major bottlenecks along international transport routes

(Item 4.6 of the Agenda)

Note by UNECE/UNESCAP

1.   In order to improve the efficiency of international transport routes and corridors, both transport infrastructure and facilitation issues need to be addressed. Major bottlenecks along international transport routes need to be identified, isolated and eliminated.

2.   The UNESCAP secretariat, in cooperation with UNCTAD and UNECA, started to implement a Development Account Project entitled "Capacity Building for Control Authorities and Transport Operators to Improve Efficiency of Cross-border Transport in Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries" from 2012. As support to the SPECA programme, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have been selected for pilot implementation of the project through the Almaty - Bishkek – Dushanbe transport corridor.

3.   The project uses the "cluster" concept of UNCTAD to bring stakeholders together to discuss the issues of cross-border and transit transport and the upgraded UNESCAP Time/Cost-Distance Methodology to identify, quantify and isolate bottlenecks to be addressed in transport process. As a result, the project is expected to develop corridor-based institutional and technical solutions to operational barriers with the formulation of national and corridor action plans for transport facilitation.

4.   Under the project, the new comprehensive toolkit, namely Cross-border and Transit Transport Process Management Toolkit (CT-TPM Toolkit) was developed and translated into Russian to facilitate its application in Central Asia by countries.

5.   Two national training workshops to launch the practical implementation of the project, create awareness of the CT-TPM Toolkit and form clusters at national level were

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organized in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in December 2012. The national training workshop in Kazakhstan is scheduled in February 2013.

6.   Further activities under the project include application of the CT-TPM Toolkit by clusters and series of meetings of clusters at national and corridor levels to formulate, adopt and agree on the implementation of cluster action plans on transport facilitation at national and corridor levels.

7.   In addition, the UNESCAP secretariat developed three transport facilitation tools to address the operational issues that impede the international road transport. They are briefly described below:

7(a) The Secure Cross-Border Transport Model provides a conceptual and standard basis for design of a cross-border vehicle monitoring system using new technologies, including ICT, satellite positioning and electronic seals. It prescribes standardized components, their interaction and institutional requirements. The application of the system based on the model can secure and facilitate the trade and transport, giving the control authorities the confidence, to open up more international land routes for trade and transport. Further details are available on the ESCAP website at the link: http://www.unescap.org/ttdw/common/TFS/SCBM.asp

7(b) The Efficient Cross-Border Transport Models provide practical solutions to the challenges in cross-border operations of land transport. With recent developments of trucking industry and technologies, the models use prime commercial cooperation to overcome institutional barriers and conflicts of commercial interests in international land transport. More details on the model are available at: http://www.unescap.org/publications/detail.asp?id=1511

7(c) The Model on Integrated Control at Border Crossing provides more efficient information flow and sharing among various agencies at border crossings by application of modern technologies (including ICT as a centre) and streamlined process of documentation and procedures, while maintaining adequate controls. It promotes optimized use of modern equipment   by   different   agencies.   Further   details   are   available   at: http://www.unescap.org/publications/detail.asp?id=1509 .

5.   The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) launched a jointly produced handbook on border crossing policies in Vienna, Austria on 22 February 2012. The Handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings – A Trade and Transport Facilitation Perspective offers a rich array of reference material and more than 120 best practice examples

at border crossings. It covers available legal instruments, inter-agency and international co-operation, balancing security and facilitation measures, processing of freight, risk management, design of border crossing points, use of ICT technologies, human resource management and benchmarking. It will help facilitate legal trade and stop illegal trade, as well as cut red tape.   It combines theoretical and practical knowledge of the two organizations."

6.   The publication was produced with financial contributions from Belgium, France, Finland, Kazakhstan and the U.S. It is currently available in English at

http://www.osce.org/eea/88200 and

http://www.unece.org/trans/publications/wp30/best_practices.html, and is now also

available in Russian, at

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/trans/bcf/publications/OSCE-UNECE_Handbook_russian.pdf

The Project Working Group may wish to:

- Encourage SPECA countries to widely use the handbook of Best Practices at Border Crossings – A Trade and Transport Facilitation Perspective, jointly published by UNECE and OSCE ;

- Encourage the relevant government authorities of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to support further implementation of the above-mentioned UNESCAP/UNCTAD Development Account Project, in particular, to support the clusters' activities;

- Consider future application of the CT-TPM Toolkit in other SPECA countries for identification of operational barriers and bottlenecks and elaboration of solutions to