

**REPORT
OF THE 16TH SESSION OF THE SPECA PROJECT WORKING GROUP ON
TRANSPORT AND BORDER CROSSING¹**

20-21 April 2011
Almaty, Kazakhstan

¹ This report has been issued without formal editing

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I. INTRODUCTION

Organization

1. The 16^h session of SPECA Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing (PWG-TBC) was held on 20-21 April 2011 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, hosted by the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the lead SPECA country in the field of transport. The session was conducted in English with simultaneous interpretation into Russian language.

Adoption of the Agenda

2. The Agenda, as adopted by the Project Working Group, is attached as Annex 1.

Attendance

3. Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Azerbaijan Republic, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Tajikistan participated in the session. The session was also attended by representatives of UNECE, UNESCAP, OSCE, EurAsEC, Asian Development Bank, Islamic Development Bank, World Bank and private sector. The list of participants is attached as Annex 2.

Opening of the session

4. The session was opened and chaired by H.E. Mr. Azat Bekturov, Vice-Minister of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan. In his statement, the Chairman welcomed the representatives of UNECE and UNESCAP and the participants of Project Working Group. He highlighted the importance of PWG's activities for SPECA countries and expressed his appreciation to the Islamic Development Bank for its continuous support to the Project Working Group.

5. Representative of UNECE delivered an opening statement on behalf of the Executive Secretary and the Director of Transport Division of UNECE. While emphasizing transport as a basic and one of its most strategic elements for the economic development of any country, she highlighted transport as an essential part of the whole economic process, as are production, trade and distribution. She added that efficiency in transport could be improved by removing obstacles such as, low standard infrastructures, and political and administrative procedures which hamper cross-border facilitation. She reiterated the need for United Nations Regional Commissions to continue to work together and, among others things, support the global application of UNECE legal instruments which would help in reducing duplication. She concluded by highlighting the importance of application of information and communication technologies, and the need to improve road safety in the region and apply land transport dangerous goods regulations.

6. In a statement delivered on behalf of the Director of Transport Division of UNESCAP, the participants to the Project Working Group noted, among other things, that the institutional framework embedded in the Intergovernmental Agreement on Asian Highway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network had boosted transport infrastructure improvements in many landlocked countries. He urged SPECA countries which are not parties to the above intergovernmental agreements to consider becoming one at their earliest convenience. He elaborated on activities related to the development of Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports, emphasizing its relevance to landlocked countries and the vital role dry ports play in fostering and clustering various economic and business activities which would contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic development in the region. He encouraged all SPECA countries to actively participate in the development of the above agreement. He added that the Secretariat would continue its efforts to identify and facilitate the implementation of transport projects through public-private partnerships. He concluded by calling upon all SPECA countries to actively participate in the Ministerial Conference on Transport in Bangkok, Thailand, which will adopt Regional Action Programme for Transport Development, Phase II (2012-2016) and Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport.

II. PROCEEDINGS

7. H.E. Mr. Bekturov briefly reported on the implementation of decisions made at the 15th session of SPECA PWG-TBC, and invited SPECA countries to provide an update on the progress achieved in the implementation of national transport developments and initiatives since the previous session of the Project Working Group.

8. The Project Working Group had for deliberations the following documents:

- a) SPECA/PWG-TBC(16)/1, providing updated information on the Asian Highway (AH) and Trans-Asian Railway (TAR) Networks, Inter-governmental agreement on dry ports, transport facilitation, capacity building and training on freight forwarding, multimodal transport and logistics, implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action, technical assistance on transport statistics, and activities carried out in cooperation with other international organizations;
- b) SPECA/PWG-TBC(16)/2, providing information relevant to the development of international transport routes/corridors and evaluation of efficiency, including activities related to Euro-Asian Transport Links (EATL) Project, and the development of inland transport infrastructure and facilitation;
- c) SPECA/PWG-TBC(16)/4 on accession to and effective implementation of international conventions recommended by the Group, inviting the Project Working group to, among other things, to reaffirm the importance of the international legal instrument listed in the protocol of its second session and reiterated the invitation addressed to SPECA countries to intensify their efforts to accede to all of them as soon as possible and to properly implement them;
- d) SPECA/PWG-TBC(16)/5 providing information relevant to road safety issues and policy interventions in the SPECA region and, among other things, encouraging SPECA countries to develop and implement a national road safety strategy and action plan with goals and targets in line with the Decade of Action for Road Safety, and to pay attention to the developments of the two projects namely, safety at level crossings and multi-disciplinary crash investigations: a tool to improve road safety;
- e) SPECA/PWG-TBG(16)/6 encouraging SPECA countries to pursue policy measures to create the appropriate institutional environment for the development of public-private partnerships and to strengthen the training programmes for government officials and other relevant stakeholders by taking advantage of training materials on PPPs prepared by UNECE and UNESCAP;
- f) SPECA/PWG-TBG(16)/7 promulgating the draft programme of work for 2012 and 2013;

- g) SPECA/PWG-TBC(16)/8 encouraging SPECA countries to establish or strengthen, as appropriate, national facilitation coordination mechanisms to review, assess, propose and take actions for the facilitation of international trade and transport, and to mobilize public and private sector resources to finance the operations and activities of the national coordination mechanisms; and
- h) SPECA/PWG-TBC(16)9 Rev. transmitting the draft agenda for the 17th session of SPECA/PWG-TBC.

9. Having considered the above documents and taking into account the presentations delivered and comments made, the SPECA PWG-TBC adopted, on 21 April 2011, the conclusions and recommendations enumerated in the ensuing section.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10. Welcoming the progress made in the implementation of the project on the development of Euro-Asian transport linkages, the PWG took note of the expert group meetings organized under the framework of the Euro-Asian Transport Linkages Project in the second half of 2010 in Istanbul, Turkey, and Turkmenbashi, Turkmenistan, and encouraged SPECA member States to actively participate in the project.

11. The PWG encouraged SPECA countries to actively participate in the UNESCAP's activities related to the development of an intergovernmental agreement on dry ports.

12. The PWG invited those SPECA member States that have not yet done so to take measures towards acceptance, approval or ratification of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Asian Highway Network and the Intergovernmental Agreement on the Trans-Asian Railway Network.

13. The PWG was informed on the Development Account Project in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The PWG took note that the project may be expanded to other SPECA countries in future.

14. The PWG encouraged freight forwarders, multimodal transport operators and logistics service providers to actively participate in the UNESCAP annual forum on 23-24 June 2011.

15. The PWG welcomed the initiative of NIITK on the preparation of the overview of the transport sector in the SPECA countries and requested SPECA Member States to provide their comments/ suggestions on the draft overview before the document is published on the SPECA Transport website.

16. In this respect, the PWG noted the role of NIITK as an institute of technical support through the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan in the implementation of the PWG-TBC projects and activities, and highlighted the need for financial and other assistance to NIITK along with continuing advisory assistance by UNESCAP and UNECE.

17. The PWG reaffirmed the importance of the international legal instruments and invited SPECA countries to intensify their efforts to accede to and effectively implement the conventions. In this respect, the PWG encourages SPECA member countries who are not yet parties in the Agreement concerning transport of dangerous goods by road (ADR) and the Agreement concerning the transport of perishable foodstuffs (ATP) to do so as soon as possible.

18. The PWG highlighted the need to identify any outstanding issues related to the accession to and implementation of the conventions, and requested UNECE and UNESCAP secretariats to provide assistance in assessing the implications of acceding to and implementing the transport-related international legal instruments, when possible.

19. Highlighting the importance of the effective cooperation and coordination among all relevant stakeholders in the public and private sector for the formulation and implementation of international transport facilitation measures, the PWG noted the current status/ progress of SPECA Member States in establishing/ strengthening national coordination mechanisms for trade and transport facilitation, and noted the availability of the UNECE and UNESCAP funds for workshops and advisory services at the request of Member countries.

20. The PWG noted with satisfaction the tangible results achieved by UNDA project Improving Global Road Safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets, jointly undertaken by five UN Regional commissions, and invited SPECA countries to take actions to respond to the decade of action for road safety and embrace the UN work undertaken at global and regional levels.

21. The PWG noted the progress achieved in the development of the common CIM/SMGS consignment note, and encouraged SPECA countries to consider actively participating in the project to contribute to the creation of the unified rail transport law and promoting facilitation of railway transportation, in particular through an effective participation in the Group of Experts which will meet for the first time on 6 May, 2011, in Geneva.

22. The PWG noted the potential benefits of Public Private Partnership modalities and encouraged SPECA Member Countries to take advantage of the training materials prepared by UNECE and UNESCAP.

23. The Project Working Group noted with interest the presentations made by the representatives of SPECA Member States on transport infrastructure and facilitation projects, activities and initiatives at the national level implemented and being implemented in line with the Almaty Programme of Action. It requested such presentations be made regularly if possible during each session of the SPECA PWG TBC, in view of making SPECA Member countries and other stakeholders in the region aware of the activities undertaken for the facilitation of transport in their immediate neighborhood. The PWG was also informed of the activities undertaken within EurAsEC, OSCE and USAID. In this respect, the PWG noted the interest given to SPECA countries by the international community, which illustrates the potential of the region for international transport.

23. The PWG adopted its programme of work for the biennium 2012-2013 (SPECA/PWG-TBG(16)/7).

24. The PWG adopted the Draft Agenda for the 17th session of the SPECA PWG-TBC with additional items on “Monitoring of the performance on major transport corridors/routes” and “International Transport of Dangerous Goods”. The Draft Agenda is set out as Annex 3.

25. The PWG agreed that the date of the session would be decided later, and requested SPECA Member States to host the sessions on the rotating basis. The PWG recommended that SPECA countries in future send appropriate delegates representing all transport and related stakeholders. The PWG also recommended that the countries neighboring the SPECA region be invited to participate in sessions of the PWG as observers.

26. Stressing the vital role of availability of financial support for the efficient functioning of PWG-TBC, the PWG expressed its appreciation to the Islamic Development Bank for its continuous support to its activities. Highlighting the importance of border crossing issues in the framework of its sessions, the PWG-TBC requested the Islamic Development Bank to consider supporting the participation of three representatives from each of the SPECA countries, which would allow for a more inclusive representation of the agencies involved in transport and border crossing at the sessions of the PWG.

27. The PWG expressed its deep gratitude to the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan for its leadership in the PWG and excellent arrangements made for the session.

Annex 1. Agenda

AGENDA FOR THE 16TH SESSION OF SPECA PWG-TBC

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Report on the 15th session of the PWG-TBC
4. UNECE/UNESCAP regional transport activities with focus on SPECA countries (UNECE/UNESCAP)
5. Review of transport projects, activities and initiatives of common interest to SPECA countries
 - 5.1 Development of international transport routes/ corridors and evaluation of their efficiency (SPECA countries/UNECE/UNESCAP)
 - 5.2 Development of the SPECA transport databases (NIITK/UNECE/UNESCAP)
 - 5.3 Accession and implementation of international conventions recommended by SPECA PWG-TBC (SPECA countries)
 - 5.4 Establishment and operation of national coordinating mechanisms for transport facilitation (SPECA countries/UNECE/UNESCAP)
 - 5.5 Road safety issues and policy interventions in the SPECA region (SPECA countries/UNECE/UNESCAP)
 - 5.6 Development of the CIM/SIMGS project and unified railway law in the SPECA region (CIT/UNECE/UNESCAP)
 - 5.7 Establishment and strengthening of public private partnerships in the SPECA countries (SPECA countries/UNECE/UNESCAP)
6. Review of transport infrastructure projects, activities and initiatives at national level (SPECA countries)
7. Programme of Work 2012-2013 (Kazakhstan/UNECE/UNESCAP)
8. Bilateral consultations on border-crossing issues between SPECA countries (SPECA countries/UNECE/UNESCAP)
9. Review of the draft agenda for the 17th session of the SPECA PWG-TBC
10. Other business
 - Date and Place of the next session of the SPECA PWG-TBC

预览已结束，完整报告链接和二维码如下：

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