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

12th session
13-14 March 2007
Dushanbe, Tajikistan

ANNOTATED DRAFT AGENDA FOR THE 12TH SESSION OF SPECA PWG-TBC

1. Opening of the Session

The session will be opened by H.E. Mr. xxx, Vice-Minister of Transport and Communications of Tajikistan [TO BE CONFIRMED], and H.E. Mr. Zhenis Kassymbek, Vice-Minister of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan [TO BE CONFIRMED], the lead country of the SPECA Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing (PWG-TBC).

Opening addresses will be delivered on behalf of the Executive Secretaries of UNECE and UNESCAP.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Documentation: Draft agenda (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/L.1);
Annotated draft agenda (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/L.2).

The delegates will be invited to **adopt** the agenda presented in document (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/L.1).

3. Report of the 11th Session of the PWG-TBC

Documentation: Report of the 11th session (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/1).

Kazakhstan, as the lead SPECA country in the field of transport and the host of the 11th session of the PWG held on 29-30 March 2006 in Almaty, will present document (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/1). The Working Group may wish to **endorse** the report.

4. Review of transport issues and initiatives in the SPECA region

a. Status report on issues and initiatives at the national level:

i. *New projects and initiatives at the national level in the field of transport*

National coordinators will report on new transport projects and initiatives in their respective countries. The Working Group may wish to **take note** of the new projects and initiatives.

ii. Establishment and functioning of national coordinating mechanisms for transport facilitation

Documentation: Establishment or strengthening of national facilitation coordinating mechanisms (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/15).

National coordinators will report on the progress achieved since the 11th session of the Working Group with respect to the establishment and functioning of national transport facilitation committees. The Working Group may wish to **take note** of the progress reported and note the need for assistance in this regard.

iii. Accession to and implementation of international conventions recommended by the Group

Documentation: Accession to and implementation of international conventions recommended by the Working Group (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/2).

Under agenda item 4 a(iii), the PWG will be informed that since the 11th session, accessions to UNECE international transport conventions in the SPECA region increased as a result of two ratifications by Kyrgyzstan in August 2006 (Convention on Road Traffic, 1968, and Convention on Road Signs and Signals, 1968) and one ratification by Azerbaijan (Contract for the International Carriage of Goods by Road (CMR), 1956) in September 2006. More details are available in the background document (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/2) prepared by the UNECE. The Working Group may wish to **reaffirm** the importance of the conventions recommended, **encourage** regular consultation with the business community on the issues related hereto, and **acknowledge** the technical assistance received from regional commissions.

b. Status report on projects/activities of common interest to SPECA countries:

i. Sub-regional project proposals adopted at the 11th session of SPECA PWG-TBC (NIITK / Kazakhstan/UNESCAP/UNECE)

Documentation: Proposed projects of common interest to SPECA countries (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/3).

The PWG will have before it document SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/3, prepared by the Research Institute of Transport and Communications (NIITK), Almaty, which provides technical support to the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the lead SPECA country in the field of transport. The document describes the current status of two projects proposed earlier (i.e. analyses of Euro-Asian transport routes in the TRACECA corridor and to Port of Bandar Abbas) and presents an additional project of common interest to SPECA countries, entitled 'Identification and analysis of transport routes from countries of Central Asia to Afghanistan and port of Karachi (Pakistan).' The new project proposal has been prepared in line with the Guidelines to improve the efficiency of PWG-TBC adopted by the 10th session of the Group in March 2005. The Working Group may wish to **be informed** by the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan about the status of fund-raising efforts pertaining to the first two projects mentioned above. It may also wish to **consider** the new project proposal and, in case of its approval, **request** the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan to submit the project to the Government of the United States of America for consideration of possible funding. The

Group may also wish to **review** the status of the three projects at its 13th session in 2008. Finally, it may also wish to **note** the importance of the Guidelines to improve the efficiency of PWG-TBC with respect to the elaboration of proposed projects of common interest to SPECA countries.

- ii. *Selection of major routes within the SPECA region using the UNESCAP time/cost methodology (UNESCAP, SPECA member countries)*

Documentation: Selection of major routes within the SPECA region for analysis using the UNESCAP time/cost methodology (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/4)

The PWG will have before it document SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/4, prepared by UNESCAP and presenting the results of its preliminary consideration of major rail, road and intermodal routes originating from the SPECA countries to destinations identified by the 11th session (Afghanistan, Europe, Russian Federation, Iran, China, Japan, India, Republic of Korea) as well as transit routes. Seven routes have been selected for data collection. The Working Group may wish to **agree** on the selected routes to be used for the Time/Cost-Distance analysis and **request** member states to collaborate with freight forwarders / transport operators to collect data on these routes.

- iii. *Requirements for the efficient use of the TIR Convention and the Harmonization Convention in the SPECA region (UNECE)*

Documentation: Border-crossing facilitation in the SPECA region (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/5).

The PWG will have before it SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/5 document the challenges and requirements for the effective implementation of the key UNECE conventions on border-crossing facilitation in the SPECA region. The Working Group may wish to **take note** and discuss the measures elaborated in the document. It may also wish to **recommend** the implementation of such measures to SPECA countries.

- iv. *Publication of maps of the SPECA road and rail networks (Kazakhstan/ UNESCAP/ UNECE)*

The Working Group requested at its 11th session the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan, the lead SPECA country in the field of transport, to explore funding opportunities for covering the costs of high quality printing of these maps. The representative of Kazakhstan will inform the Working Group on the current status of this activity. The Working Group may wish to **take note** of the activities related to the publication of maps of the SPECA road and rail networks.

- v. *Development of the SPECA PWG-TBC transport databases (NIITK/UNESCAP/UNECE)*

Documentation: Establishment of the SPECA PWG-TBC transport databases (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/6)

The PWG will have before it documents SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/6 and SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/7, prepared by the Research Institute of Transport and Communications (NIITK). The document reports on the progress achieved since the 11th session in developing the four priority transport databases for the SPECA region that were selected by the Working Group

(rail routes, road routes, border crossing points, intermodal transport). Annexes to the report show main parameters of international roads, rail lines and border-crossing points in the SPECA region. The Working Group is invited to **request** the SPECA countries to consider and, if necessary, to define more exactly or add information to the road, rail and border-crossing databases. It may also wish to **consider** the improved format of the database on intermodal infrastructure and **provide guidance** on its further development. The Group may also wish to **request** UNESCAP to elaborate until July 2007 an appropriate Methodology for the Asian Highways database to identify the technical capability to transport all types of containers and indicate detours on those route sections, where such transport is impossible. Finally, the Group may wish to **decide** to include in the Agenda of the 13th session the NIITK information note about the progress achieved in developing the PWG-TBC database.

vi. *The SPECA guide on road wayside facilities (NIITK)*

Documentation: The SPECA guide on road wayside facilities (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/7)

The PWG will have before it document SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/7, prepared by the Research Institute of Transport and Communications (NIITK). The document reports on the progress achieved in developing the SPECA guide on road wayside facilities during Phase I (Kazakhstan). The Working Group may wish to **request** the road administration authorities of the Republic of Kazakhstan to consider the project at hand and provide the missing information on road wayside facilities. It may also wish to **remind** all parties concerned that the information pertaining to the location of wayside facilities along international highways of the SPECA network ought to be provided to NIITK on a regular basis. Finally, the Group may wish to **decide** to include in the Agenda of the 13th session the NIITK information note about the progress achieved in developing the SPECA guide on road wayside facilities.

vii. *OSCE transit transport conference in Dushanbe, Fall 2007 (UNECE)*

Documentation: OSCE transit conference in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, Fall 2007 (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/8).

Agenda item 4 b(vi) refers to the possible participation of the PWG in the forthcoming OSCE conference on the prospects for development of Eurasian transit transportation through Central Asia till the year 2015. The Government of Tajikistan has offered to host the conference in Dushanbe in Fall 2007. The background paper (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/8), prepared by the UNECE, provides information on the objectives and modalities of the Dushanbe conference. The Working Group is invited to **welcome** the OSCE plans to organize the high-level 'Dushanbe transit conference' in Fall 2007. The Group may also wish to **request** SPECA countries to actively participate in the conference. Finally, it may also **consider requesting** the government of Kazakhstan, the lead SPECA country in the field of transport, to participate at the OSCE conference mentioned above and present the major achievements and future plans of the PWG-TBC.

c. **Status report on UNECE/ UNESCAP regional and interregional projects of common interest to SPECA countries:**

i. *Intergovernmental Agreements on the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway Networks (UNESCAP)*

Documentation: Intergovernmental Agreements on the Asian Highway and the Trans-Asian Railway Networks (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12/9))

The UNESCAP will present document SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/9, which reports on the progress and current status of the two Intergovernmental Agreements and UNESCAP's recent activities to promote intermodal integration of AH and TAR with sea ports and maritime transport networks. The Working Group may wish to **encourage** further accessions of SPECA countries to these Agreements. It may also wish to **emphasize** the importance of intermodal integration of transport networks to landlocked developing SPECA countries and **encourage** the SPECA countries to actively participate in the UNESCAP activities in this area.

- ii. *The UNECE-UNESCAP joint project on developing Euro-Asian transport links (UNECE / UNESCAP)*

Documentation: Brief Description of the Progress of the UNECE-UNESCAP Euro-Asian Transport Linkages Project (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/10).

The Working Group will have before it document SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/10 on the progress of the Euro-Asian transport linkages project related to the SPECA/Central Asian countries. The UNECE will provide information on the progress of the project, including the results of its 4th Expert Group meeting held in Thessaloniki, Greece, in November 2006 as well as on the UNECE and UNESCAP efforts to ensure funding for the continuation of the project in a new Phase II. The Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan will provide information on the follow-up of the decisions of the 11th session of the PWG in this regard. The Working Group may wish to **welcome** the progress of the UNECE-UNESCAP joint project on developing Euro-Asian transport links. It may also **request** the UNECE-UNESCAP secretariats to continue their efforts to secure extra-budgetary funds for the proposed extension (Phase II) of this important project. The group may also wish to **utilize** the most appropriate framework to ensure the efficient coordination and monitoring of activities related to the Euro – Asian Transport Linkages project on the basis of the Expert Group Meeting established under the project. Finally, it may also **request** the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan (as the lead SPECA country in the field of transport), on behalf of the SPECA PWG-TBC, to address an official letter to the European Commission EuropeAid, confirming the importance of the project to the SPECA countries and supporting UNECE's request to consider possible funding for new phase of the project.

- iii. *The UNECE Pilot Project on the facilitation of participation of Central Asian and Caucasus countries in the meetings of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee and selected subsidiary bodies, funded by the EU (UNECE)*

Documentation: Brief Description of the Progress of the EU funded UNECE Pilot Project on the Facilitation of Participation of Central Asia and Caucasus Countries in Meetings of the Inland Transport Committee and Selected Subsidiary Bodies (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/11)

- (a) The UNECE will report on the progress of the EU funded UNECE Pilot Project on the Facilitation of Participation of Central Asia and Caucasus Countries in Meetings of the Inland Transport Committee and Selected Subsidiary Bodies. The report on the current status of this project

(SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/11) invites the Working Group to **evaluate** the project's substantive contribution to the harmonization process of the transport legislation of SPECA countries and to the integration of their transport systems with those of adjacent UNECE member states. The Group may also wish to **stress** the importance of participation of SPECA countries in the work of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee, **express** its gratitude to the EU for its contribution and **request** the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Kazakhstan, the lead SPECA country in the field of transport, to address a letter on behalf of the PWG-TBC to the EC EuroAid, confirming the importance of this project for SPECA countries and supporting the UNECE's request to the EU to consider co-funding its continuation, as well as welcoming the UNECE's initiative to explore the possibility of allowing Afghanistan to participate.

5. Bilateral consultations on border-crossing issues of interest to Tajikistan (Tajikistan/ UNESCAP / UNECE)

Following the recommendation of the 10th session of SPECA PWG-TBC to establish the practice of conducting bilateral consultations on border-crossing issues amongst the SPECA countries, three rounds of bilateral consultations on border-crossing issues between Tajikistan and its immediate SPECA neighbors, i.e. Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, are planned to be held with support of UNECE and UNESCAP.

6. Programme of Work 2008 – 2009

Documentation: Draft Programme of Work 2008-2009 (SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/12)

The Draft Programme of Work, summarised in the document SPECA/PWG-TBC(12)/12, has been developed in line with the Almaty Programme of Action (2003) and the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2006). The Working Group may wish to **review, modify and endorse** the Draft Programme of Work for the time period 2008-2009.

7. Review of the draft agenda for the 13th session of the SPECA PWG-TBC

Documentation: Draft Agenda for the 13th session of the SPECA PWG-TBC (SPECA/PWG-TBC(11)/13)

The Working Group may wish to **review** the draft agenda of the 13th session of the Project Working Group (SPECA/PWG-TBC(11)/13) and **agree** on the tentative date and venue of the 13th session.

8. Other business

Documentation: Clearing House on the Transport, Health and Environment Trans-European Programme (SPECA/PWG-TBC(11)/14)

The Working Group may wish to **take note** of the background document SPECA/PWG-TBC(11)/14, pertaining to the joint UNECE/WHO Europe project on transport,

health and environment. It may also wish to **provide guidance** as to the ways and means of enhancing the participation of SPECA countries in this project.

The Working Group may also wish to **consider** any other matter that may be brought to its attention.

9. Adoption of the Report

The Working Group will **consider** and **adopt** the report on its 12th session.

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