

**REPORT  
OF THE 15<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE SPECA PROJECT WORKING GROUP ON  
TRANSPORT AND BORDER CROSSING<sup>1</sup>**

7-8 April, 2010  
Almaty, Kazakhstan

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<sup>1</sup> This report has been issued without formal editing

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Following the presentation and consideration of the session documents as stipulated in the Agenda of the 15<sup>th</sup> session of SPECA PWG-TBC, the Project Working Group arrived at the following conclusions and recommendations:
2. 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 (2003) and the Busan Declaration on Transport Development in Asia and the Pacific (2006).
3. The PWG reaffirmed the importance of the international legal instruments listed in the report of the 2<sup>nd</sup> session of SPECA PWG-TBC, including the TIR, Harmonization and ATP conventions, and invited SPECA countries to intensify their efforts to accede and effectively implement the conventions.
4. 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.
5. 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 possible benefits that could be brought about by effective functioning of such mechanisms.
6. The PWG noted the usefulness of the UNECE (ITC) and UNESCAP Time/Cost-Distance methodologies in identification and isolation of bottlenecks along international routes and corridors, and invited SPECA Member Countries to consider wider application of the methodologies and to use the findings from the application of the methodologies for consideration of facilitation measures, and requested the Forums/ Associations of entrepreneurs of SPECA countries to present their time/cost analysis of selected routes at the 16th session of the SPECA PWG-TBC

7. The PWG welcomed the progress achieved with regard to the organization of container block train services in the SPECA region, and encouraged SPECA countries to use container block train modality to benefit from the flexibility and speed of intermodal transportation.
8. The PWG encouraged SPECA countries to participate in the corridor-based cooperative arrangement for operationalization of international intermodal transport corridors, and in the planning and organization of demonstration runs of transport operation along selected corridors.
9. Following the presentation made by CIT, 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. The PWG also noted with interest the ongoing activities of OSJD for the development of Euro-Asian rail transport.
10. The PWG reviewed the progress in the development of four SPECA transport databases, namely, the databases on road and rail routes of international importance in the SPECA region; the database on border crossing and the database on intermodal transport infrastructure in the SPECA region, and requested SPECA countries, UNECE and UNESCAP to provide regularly data and information to the Ministry of Transport and Communication of Kazakhstan, the lead SPECA country in the field of transport, for updating of the SPECA transport databases.
11. 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 website of the Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Kazakhstan.
12. The PWG stressed the crucial 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.
13. The PWG was informed that with regard to the subregional project proposal on transport routes from Central Asia/SPECA countries to the port of Bandar Abbas, the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the ECO Railway Committee, held in November 2009 in Astana, Kazakhstan, decided to include the study of the Bandar Abbas – Almaty container train in the feasibility study of the container block train Istanbul – Almaty.

14. 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. The PWG encouraged SPECA Member Countries to actively participate in the Second Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Public Private Partnerships for Infrastructure Development 2010 organized by the Government of Indonesia with the support from UNESCAP in Jakarta on 16-17 April 2010.
15. 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 set national road safety targets and work towards their achievement. The PWG took note of the outcome of the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety held in Moscow in November 2009, and the UN General Assembly resolution on improving global road safety, proclaiming the period 2011-2020 as the Decade of Action for Road Safety.
16. The PWG took note of the Bangkok Declaration on Transport Development in Asia, adopted by the first session of Forum of Asian Ministers of Transport, held in Bangkok in December 2009, and encouraged SPECA countries to actively participate in the UNESCAP's activities related to the implementation of the Busan Declaration and the Bangkok Declaration, including the development of an intergovernmental agreement on dry ports. 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 Trans-Asian Railway Network.
17. 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 meeting to be organized under the framework of the Euro-Asian Transport Linkages Project in the second half of 2010 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, and encouraged SPECA member States to actively participate in the project.
18. The PWG expressed its gratitude to UNESCAP for organization of UNESCAP's skill development tools in multimodal transport and logistics and national ToT (Training of Trainers) workshop with training tools to be translated into Russian language, held in Almaty, Kazakhstan in August 2009, as well as the regional ToT workshop organized in October 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand. The PWG requested UNESCAP to assist other SPECA countries in establishing their own training courses.

19. The PWG supported unofficial bilateral consultations on border-crossing issues between Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan held on 7 April 2010 under the framework of SPECA PWG-TBC. The PWG requested to organize the bilateral consultation on transport and border crossing issues between SPECA countries at the next 16th session of SPECA PWG-TBC.
20. The PWG stressed the importance of the Guidelines to improve the efficiency of the Group and suggested including an item on Review of implementation of the Guidelines into the Agenda of 17th Session (2012) of SPECA PWG-TBC.
21. The PWG adopted the Draft Agenda for the 16th session of the SPECA PWG-TBC with additional items on “Development of recommendations on the mechanisms simplifying business processes at border crossing points” and “The application/implementation of the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods under Cover of TIR Carnets in the SPECA region”.
22. 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 also recommended that the countries neighbouring the SPECA region be invited to participate in sessions of the PWG as observers. The PWG noted that the sessions could be organized in blocks covering road and rail transport separately.
23. 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.
24. 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.
25. The conclusions and recommendations of the 15<sup>th</sup> session of SPECA PWG-TBC were unanimously adopted on 8 April 2010 in Almaty, Kazakhstan.