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Economic Commission for Europe

Economic Cooperation and Integration Division

Third UNECE Forum of Women Entrepreneurs “Building partnerships to close the entrepreneurship gender gaps in the UNECE region”

Baku, 14 - 15 November 2012

Information notice

Note by the secretariat

I. Introduction

1. The Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995) highlighted the importance of promoting women’s economic rights and independence. It called on governments to ensure equal access to and control over economic resources for women and men and encouraged the provision of business services, training and access to information and communication technologies. The fifteen-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) undertaken in 2009 highlighted important gender gaps in the economic realm. The Chairperson’s Conclusions at the Beijing +15 Regional Review Meeting organized on 2-3 November 2009 in Geneva therefore called for further efforts to strengthen women’s opportunities to get involved in economic activities, including through entrepreneurship. In accordance with this request and after consultations with the authorities and other stakeholders in Azerbaijan, it was agreed to hold the Third UNECE Forum of Women Entrepreneurs on 14 and 15 November in Baku, Azerbaijan.

2. This Information notice provides details regarding the organization of and participation in the above-mentioned Forum, which will jointly be organized by the Economic Cooperation and Integration Division and the Gender and Economy Programme at the UNECE in cooperation with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

3. UNECE has a longstanding commitment to the promotion of women’s entrepreneurship development. Respecting this commitment, over the past decade the UNECE has been active in promoting the potential of women entrepreneurs in the region. The UNECE’s convening power allows this organization to directly address decision makers of its Member States to raise awareness on issues related to women’s entrepreneurship. In this spirit, in 2001 and 2003 UNECE organized two fora bringing together women entrepreneurs and government representatives from the whole UNECE

region (which includes the countries from South-East Europe, Central Asia, Central and Eastern Europe as well as Western Europe and North America). These events discussed key issues of concern and identified good practices in gender-sensitive entrepreneurship policies.

4. In 2010, a subregional Forum, namely the First Forum of South East European Women Entrepreneurs, took place in Istanbul. It focused on assisting those women entrepreneurs in South-East Europe who intended to expand their activities or render them more innovative. In September 2011, UNECE organized a policy seminar on women's entrepreneurship development in Central Asia. This seminar discussed the major findings of the assessments of the business environment for women entrepreneurs in Tajikistan and Kazakhstan.

5. The Third Forum will continue the UNECE tradition of integrating women entrepreneurs and women's business associations within the region, strengthening their networks and building partnerships with government and research institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international organizations.

II. Objectives and scope

6. The main objective of the Third UNECE Forum of Women Entrepreneurs is to provide a platform for a broad exchange of practical experiences and lessons learned among policymakers, business community (female and male entrepreneurs) and academia, as well as other stakeholders on good practices and policies of promoting women's entrepreneurship development and narrowing the gap between the scopes of women's and men's entrepreneurial activities in the UNECE region.

7. The Forum will address issues in the following key areas:

- Promoting women's entrepreneurship through policies, strategies and programmes;
- Strengthening networks among women entrepreneurs at national, regional and global levels;
- Financing women entrepreneurs;
- Innovative entrepreneurship and gender sensitive policies; and
- Developing women entrepreneurship in rural areas.

8. The programme of the Forum includes three thematic sessions which will cover different challenges to women entrepreneurship at regional and country levels, as well as problems faced by innovation-based enterprises. With a view to ensuring broad possibilities of exchange of information, learning and networking each session will include presentations by both leading international and national experts. Major issues to be covered are presented in the Annotated Provisional Programme (Annex I).

III. Organization

9. The Third UNECE Forum of Women Entrepreneurs will take place on 14 and 15 November 2012 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

10. The registration of participants for the Forum will start on 14 November at 8.30. The Forum will begin at 9.30 on the same day and finish on 15 November at 13.00. It will be organized into three working sessions and a closing session which will come up with the conclusions of the Forum in the form of a Declaration.

IV. Participation

11. Participation is open to interested parties from UNECE member countries and other Member States of the United Nations, representatives of United Nations specialized agencies and international organizations participating in the activities of UNECE. Broad participation of government officials, the private sector, including women entrepreneurs and the women entrepreneurship associations, as well as academia is welcome.

12. To ensure participation of national experts with relevant expertise, Governments are invited to inform on the Forum national entities dealing with the issues to be discussed at this event, including SME, as well as women's and industry associations, consulting companies and other stakeholders.

V. Conference fee

13. No conference fee is charged for participation in the Forum. Travel and accommodation expenses are expected to be borne by the participants.

VI. Passports and visas

14. All participants should be in possession of a valid passport, with an entry visa (if required) which can be obtained from the diplomatic representation of Azerbaijan in their country of residence. It is advisable to make such visa applications well in advance of the date required.

VII. Preliminary registration

15. Interested parties are invited to fill in the attached Registration Form (Annex II) and return it by 5 November 2012 at the latest to the following address:

Ms. Malinka Koparanova
Room 329-1, OES, UNECE
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Phone: (+41 22) 917 1698
Fax: (+41 22) 917 0036
E-mail: malinka.koparanova@unece.org

VIII. Documentation

16. UNECE Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, companies and individual experts and entrepreneurs are invited to prepare papers for presentation at the Forum. Main issues to be covered by such papers are presented in the Annotated Provisional Programme (Annex I).

17. By 15 October 2012, the secretariat should receive papers for presentation in English, French or Russian. The secretariat encourages submission of papers in electronic format, preferably by e-mail. Papers will be circulated in the language of submission. The updated Provisional programme of the Forum will be circulated to the registered participants about one week before this event.

IX. Interpretation and visual aids

18. Simultaneous interpretation in English and Russian, facilities for projecting slides, as well as facilities for computer-aided presentations (e.g. Power Point) will be provided.

X. Travel and hotel reservations

19. Participants are requested to make their own hotel and travel arrangements to and from Baku. For hotels in Baku, see Annex III.

XI. Further information

20. Further information on the Forum can be obtained from:

Ms. Malinka Koparanova and
Room 329-1, OES, UNECE
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Phone: (+41 22) 917 1698
E-mail: malinka.koparanova@unece.org

Mr. Iouri Adjoubei (SESSION 2)
Room 447, ECID, UNECE
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Phone: (+41 22) 917 2488
E-mail: iouri.adjoubei@unece.org

innovation-based enterprises, including those operated by women. Finally, the session will address the issues of developing the cooperation between governments and other stakeholders (private sector, academic and educational institutions) to facilitate innovative entrepreneurship by men and women.

Expected Speakers: Successful women academic entrepreneurs

Representatives from government institutions and agencies working in the field of innovation

Domestic and foreign investors

Innovative companies

16.30 - 16.45 **Coffee break**

16.45 - 18.00 **SESSION 2 (Continued)**

Thursday, 15 November 2012

9.30 – 12.30 **SESSION 3. PROMOTING WOMEN’S ENTREPRENEURSHIP THROUGH POLICIES, STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES AT COUNTRY LEVEL**

The session will provide a forum for sharing experience on how to implement coherent public policies, private initiatives and public-private partnerships at country level to promote women’s entrepreneurship and by that to lessen the existing gender gaps in UNECE Member States. Representatives of various organizations supporting entrepreneurship – ministries of economy and trade, investment committees, SMEs agencies, private companies – will present successful projects and discuss how to better address the needs of women entrepreneurs in their countries.

Expected Speakers: Representatives of Women’s Business Associations

Representatives from government institutions and agencies

Representatives from SME associations

Successful women entrepreneurs

11.00 - 11.15 **Coffee break**

11.30 - 12.30 **SESSION 3 (Continued)**

12.30 - 13.00 **CLOSING SESSION**

Annex II

Registration form

This form should be filled in and returned as soon as possible but **not later than 5 November 2012** to:

Ms. Malinka Koparanova
Room 329-1, OES, UNECE
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Fax: (+41 22) 917 0036
E-mail: malinka.koparanova@unece.org

(Please type or write in block capitals in **English**)

Family name (Mr., Ms.):

.....

First name:

.....

Nationality:

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Professional position:

.....

Representing Government, international organization or company:

.....

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Professional address:

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Telephone (please include country and city codes):

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Telefax (please include country and city codes):

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E-mail address:

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Annex III

List of hotels

Hotel	Phone/Fax	Other information	Room prices
Old City Inn	+994 12 4974369	<i>15 rooms</i>	60 AZN
Icheri Sheher	+994 12 4926918/ 4925315	<i>8 rooms</i>	70 AZN
Park Inn	+994 12 4906000	http://www.baku.rezidorparkinn.com/ <i>248 rooms</i>	165 AZN
Museum Inn	+994 50 303 63 13	http://www.museum-inn.az/hotel.html <i>8 rooms</i>	Single - 150 AZN Double - 190 AZN
Kichik Gala	+994 50 303 63 13	www.kichikgalahotel.com	Single - 110 AZN Double - 120 AZN
Horizon hotel	+994 50 303 63 13	www.thehorizonhotel.az	Single - 95 AZN Double - 100 AZN
Atropat	+994 50 303 63 13	http://www.atropathotel.com/ info@atropathotel.com <i>26 standard, 2 junior and 2 suit rooms</i>	Single - 135 AZN Double - 150 AZN
Sultan Inn	+994 50 303 63 13	www.sultaninn.com	Single - 150 AZN Double - 180 AZN
Marriot Hotel	+994 12 499 88 88	http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/gydjw-jw-marriott-hotel-absheron-baku/	180 AZN