



First session of the SPECA Coordinating Committee

(Baku, Azerbaijan, 7 December 2005)

DECISIONS

Decision I (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/1)

The Committee welcomed Afghanistan as a full member of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia. The Committee invited the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to actively participate in and take full advantage of projects and activities of SPECA.

Decision II (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/2)

The Committee considered the report on the Ad hoc session of the Project Working Group (PWG) on Water and Energy Resources (Almaty, 9-10 November 2005) and endorsed the proposals and recommendations contained therein. The Committee called upon member countries to fully implement them and invited UNECE and UNESCAP, as well as other relevant organizations and institutions to provide support to their implementation. The Committee decided that it would be important to inform the participants in the Fourth World Water Forum to be held in Mexico in March 2006 about the importance of water issues for the SPECA region, and ongoing SPECA work in this area, and requested the Chair of the PWG on Water and Energy Resources and the Secretariats of UNECE and UNESCAP to identify the most appropriate way of doing so.

Decision III (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/3)

The Committee considered the report on the inaugural session of the PWG on ICT for Development (Baku, 5-6 December 2005) and endorsed the proposals and recommendations contained therein. The Committee called upon member countries to fully implement them and invited UNECE and UNESCAP, as well as other relevant organizations and institutions to provide support to their implementation.

Decision IV (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/4)

The Committee considered and endorsed the reports on preparations for the PWG on Transport and Border Crossing (2006), PWG on Trade (2006), PWG on Statistics (2006) and noted with appreciation information on preparations for the setting up of the Working Group on Gender and Economy (preparatory meeting to be held in Geneva on 8-9 December 2005). In this context members of the Committee highlighted the following points:

- (a) The PWG on Transport and Border Crossing at its 11th session was invited to:
 - (i) Pay particular attention to the following areas of cooperation:
 - Development of sub-regional project proposals of interest to all SPECA countries for submission to potential donors, as well as the new joint UNECE-UNESCAP project

- proposal on capacity building in developing transit transport cooperation of landlocked and transit countries in Central Asia;
- Establishment of databases on international routes, major investment projects, and border crossing problems; and
 - Analysis of major selected routes within the SPECA sub-region using the UNESCAP time/cost methodology.
- (ii) Take into account the current situation with road development in Afghanistan and new opportunities for cooperation in the area of transport in the SPECA region in light of Afghanistan becoming a new member of the Programme.
- (b) The new PWG on Trade, once it is established, was invited to:
- Develop active inter-action with the PWG on Transport and Border Crossing and the newly established PWG on ICT for Development;
 - Consider possibilities of establishing cooperation with the SPECA Network of Economic Research Institutions (SNERI) once the latter is established;
 - Undertake efforts to raise funds needed for the implementation of a project on capacity building for the implementation of international agricultural quality standards in the SPECA countries, considering the importance of this issue for the region.
- (c) The Committee agreed that it would be important FOR the PWGs to hold their meetings before the first session of SPECA Governing Council in June 2006 (see Decision VIII).

Decision V (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/5)

The Committee endorsed the following countries for the co-chairmanship of the Project Working Groups of SPECA:

- Project Working Group on Water and Energy Resources: Kyrgyzstan.
- Project Working Group of ITC for Development: Azerbaijan
- Project Working Group on Transport and Border Crossing: Kazakhstan
- Project Working Group on Statistics: Tajikistan

The Committee decided that consultations among SPECA countries on the Co-Chairmanship of the PWG on Trade, as well as on the second co-chairpersons of PWGs listed above should be expedited so that agreement can be reached as soon as possible (see also relevant part of the Report of the Committee).

Decision VI (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/6)

The Committee decided that further implementation of the initiative on SPECA Business Council should be carried out in the context of recent decision of CAREC taken at its 4th Ministerial Meeting (Bishkek, 5-6 November 2005) to establish the Regional Business Roundtable for Central-South Asia, and invited the business community from the SPECA region as well as from interested neighbouring countries to actively participate in relevant CAREC and SPECA activities.

Decision VII (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/7)

The Committee considered and endorsed the progress report on the initiative to set up a SPECA Network of Economic Research Institutes. The Committee encouraged the UNECE, UNESCAP and their partner organizations and institutions cooperating on the project to continue the intensive preparatory work with the objective of inaugurating the Network at the first meeting of the SPECA Economic Forum to be held in June 2006 in Baku (see draft decision IX). The Committee also endorsed the proposed institutional linkage with ARTNet in trade related research.

Decision VIII (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/8)

The Committee endorsed Azerbaijan as the first Chairman of the SPECA Governing Council. The Committee welcomed with appreciation the proposal of Azerbaijan to convene the first session of the Governing Council in mid-June 2006 in Baku.

Decision IX (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/9)

The Committee welcomed proposals of UNECE and UNESCAP regarding the objectives and format of the SPECA Economic Forum and endorsed the proposal of Azerbaijan to hold the first meeting of the Forum in conjunction with the first meeting of the SPECA Governing Council in mid-June 2006 in Baku. The Committee agreed that the theme of the first meeting of the Economic Forum would be determined through consultation by no later than 15 January 2006. The Committee invited SPECA member countries, UNECE and UNESCAP and other interested organisations and institutions, as well as the representatives of academic and business communities to take an active part in its preparations and deliberations.

Decision X (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/10)

The Committee noted with appreciation the report on on-going consultations on strengthening SPECA-CAREC cooperation. It encouraged member States as well as the UNECE, UNESCAP and members of the CAREC, namely the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the International Monetary Fund, the Islamic Development Bank, the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank to take further step towards strengthening cooperation between the two Programmes in order to achieve maximum complementarity of efforts while avoiding possible duplication.

The Committee also discussed and approved the text of a letter from the Chairman of the Committee to be sent on behalf of its members to the Head of Delegation of the European Commission to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, proposing to start consultations developing cooperation between SPECA and the European Commission.

Decision XI (SPECA/CC/Dec/2005/11)

The Committee decided that the date and venue of its next formal session would be determined during the first session of SPECA Governing Council in Baku in June 2006. The meeting of the Governing Council would also provide members of the Coordinating Committee an opportunity to meet informally, if required.