

UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration

Bureau Meeting

23 September 2011, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Report on the Meeting

Present:

Bureau: Mr. M. Pietarinen, Finland, Chair of CECI
Mr. A. Popov, Belarus, Vice-Chair of CECI
Mr. C. Reilly, United States, Vice-Chair of CECI
Mr. S. Zecchini, Italy, Vice-Chair of CECI

Secretariat: Mr. R. Dobrinsky, Director, ECID
Mr. G. Hamilton, Chief of Section, ECID
Mr. J. Palacin, Chief of Section, ECID
Mr. I. Adjoubei, ECID

Informal meeting with the UNECE Bureau

The meeting of the Bureau was preceded by an informal meeting with the Bureau of the Economic Commission for Europe (Chair, Ambassador Ugljesa Zvekic, Serbia and a representative of the Vice Chair, Romania). During this meeting, the UNECE Bureau briefed the CECI Bureau on its vision of the modalities of the Review of the UNECE work. As one of the objectives of the Review, the UNECE Bureau emphasized the need to strengthen the outreach, and improve the measuring of impact and reporting on the results of the Commission's activities. It also addressed some outstanding issues related to coordinating the Committee's work with that of other international organizations. The CECI Bureau informed the UNECE Bureau on the current and prospective steps envisaged to address those issues.

CECI Bureau meeting

Item 1 - Adoption of the agenda

1. The Agenda was adopted.

Item 2 - Preparation for the sixth session of CECI, 30 November - 2 December 2011

2. The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the status of preparations for the sixth session of the Committee. It presented the final version of the preliminary agenda for the sixth session and highlighted the process of self-evaluation by the subsidiary teams of specialists operating under the Committee. The objective of this exercise is to show vividly the added value by the TOSs and support the extension of their mandates. Progress reports by the TOSs will feed into the Review Report on the CECI's work. Grouping of the thematic areas into the two clusters: innovative knowledge-based development and public-private partnerships has been incorporated into the draft programme of work for 2012-2013 and will be proposed for inclusion into the UNECE strategic framework for 2014-2015. The Bureau noted that the clustering of the activities interlinking the thematic areas makes the Committee's programme more solid and

allows for more flexibility in its implementation. This will not require merging the TOSs, which will operate independently but in close collaboration.

3. Under this agenda item, the Secretariat also highlighted the status of negotiations with Vneshekonombank of Russian Federation which intended to provide significant extrabudgetary resources to finance the activities of the TOS on PPPs. It also briefed the Bureau on its consultations with WIPO intending to better delineate the respective areas of operation as well as promote the cooperation between WIPO and UNECE in the region.

Item 3 - Consultations on the process of reviewing the work of the Committee in accordance with the modalities of the UNECE Review

4. In the context of the Review of the UNECE work, the Bureau noted that in compliance with the general UN rules and regulations, the budgeting and programming processes went in parallel. The programme of work of the Committee will be adopted by UNECE once the review process is finished in the fourth quarter of 2012 as a package of work programmes of all sectoral committees. In the meantime, the Committee will continue to implement its programme within the approved budget for the biennium. As agreed by ExCom, the final version of the work programmes for 2012-2013 of all Sectoral Committees, including CECI, will be submitted for approval by ExCom only at the end of the UNECE Review, in the fourth quarter of 2012. The Review rulings by ExCom might imply the need for adjustments in the programme of work by the seventh session of CECI but this could only affect its activities in 2013.

5. The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the contents and structure of the Review report to be submitted by the Committee to the ExCom. The Secretariat has prepared a preparatory material for this report (first draft), which included a narrative part and annexes with tables. In order to ensure that the Committee report reflects the views of the majority of member States, the secretariat would seek to obtain opinions on the draft from as many stakeholders as possible.

6. The Bureau recommended that an introductory part should be added to the narrative section of the preliminary material (first draft of the report). This should highlight the mandate and goals of the Committee's activities as well as the major objectives of the Review process. The major results of the CECI activities section should be made more user-friendly and should better highlight the major accomplishments of the Committee during the period under review. The Bureau also recommended that the text be condensed to emphasize the role of capacity building as a major objective. It should also underline the need to continue the normative work as a basis for capacity building. The narrative should also have a forward-looking concluding section.

7. The annex parts of the Review report should be further condensed highlighting the major achievements and objectives in bullet points. Emphasis should be made on those accomplishments, which are associated with the most important results and impact.

8. The Bureau requested that the revised preparatory material (first draft) be submitted to the Bureau for further comments and then distributed to member States with a cover letter from the Chairman of the Committee requesting from countries the expert opinion on priorities in the programme of work.

9. While reflecting on improving the outreach and ways of disseminating information on the Committee's activities, the Bureau thought that various instruments, for example, newsletters, and policy briefs could serve this purpose. The language of these media should be simplified to be easily understood by the target audience (primarily policy makers) .

Item 4 - Other business

9. The Bureau agreed that its next meeting will take place in conjunction with the sixth session of CECI, tentatively on 2 December 2011.