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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

Ad Hoc Informal Meeting
2 December 2006

REPORT

Agenda item 2: UNECE Reform

1. The Commission, in formal segment, adopted the Work Plan on UNECE reform, as contained in document E/ECE/1434, revised to incorporate the changes agreed to on 22 November 2005. It was noted that the revised version would be issued as document E/ECE/1434/Rev.1 in the three UNECE working languages.
2. The Chairperson presented six proposals on follow-up and implementation, as contained in his concluding remarks at the 22 November meeting of the Intergovernmental Open-ended Negotiation Committee, annexed herewith. Member States endorsed these proposals with one change in respect of the dates of the Annual Session, which would start on 20 or 21 February 2006.

Agenda item 3: Annual Session

3. The Commission, in informal segment, discussed the draft provisional agenda prepared by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau and agreed that the substance of the Annual Session would determine its duration. In this connection, the Chairperson suggested that member States send their comments on the draft agenda to the Officer-in-Charge by the end of the year. The secretariat would take these comments into account, revise the agenda as appropriate, and circulate the revised version to member States prior to the Annual Session.

Agenda item 4: Spring Seminar

4. The Commission discussed various options presented by the Chairperson regarding the timing of the Seminar, namely (a) on the eve of the Commission session; (b) linked to the first meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration; and (c) postponed to 2007.

5. While the Chairperson recommended the second option in the light of the ongoing reform and the time needed for preparation, he requested that the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work (GEPW) discuss the timing of the Seminar at its meeting on 14 December 2005. After that, the Chairperson would finalize the timing with the Chairperson of the GEPW.

ANNEX

CONCLUDING REMARKS OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE “INTERGOVERNMENTAL OPEN-ENDED NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE”

1. The UNECE member States represented in the Intergovernmental Open-ended Negotiation Committee met regularly from 20 September 2005. On 22 November they successfully concluded their work by agreeing on a Work Plan on UNECE reform. The proposed reform measures are the result of discussions among member States based on the findings of the external evaluation report on the state of UNECE.
2. The chairman of the Intergovernmental Open-ended Negotiation Committee recommends the Work Plan on UNECE Reform to the Commission for adoption at its Ad Hoc Informal Meeting on 2 December 2005.
3. Once adopted, the chairman recommends that the reform should enter into force at the annual session of the Commission on 27 March 2006.¹
4. The chairman also recommends that the necessary steps to modify the governance structure of UNECE should be taken as soon as possible after the adoption of the Work Plan on UNECE Reform. The chairman therefore suggests that the negotiations on the Terms of Reference and the Rules of Procedure should start on 8 December 2005.
5. The chairman also suggests that these negotiations should take place within the Intergovernmental Open-ended Negotiation Committee.
6. The chairman considers that if the timetable proposed above is met, the Commission will be able to formally adopt the revised Rules of Procedure of the Commission and the terms of reference and rules of procedure of the Executive Committee at its session of 27 March 2006¹ as foreseen in the Work Plan on UNECE Reform. During this session the Commission would also elect the representative of the country who would chair the Commission as well as the two vice-chairs.
7. The chairman finally suggests that the Executive Committee should hold its first meeting as soon as possible after the session of the Commission starting on 27 March 2006.¹ During the first year, the Executive Committee should primarily implement the measures contained in the Work Plan on UNECE Reform. It should report on the implementation of UNECE reform to the annual session of the Commission in Spring 2007.
8. As long as the decisions needed for the implementation of the new governance structure foreseen in the Work Plan have not been adopted by the annual session of the Commission, the existing governance structures of UNECE will remain active.

¹ See paragraph 2 of the Report. The dates of the Commission are now 21-23 February 2006.