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(21-23 February 2006)
(Item 4 of the provisional agenda)

REPORT OF THE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON THE PROGRAMME OF WORK

Report by the Chairperson of the Group of Experts

Addendum

The table below contains basic information on the follow-up to decisions of the Commission and has been introduced by the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work (GEPW) as a tool to monitor the implementation of the Commission's decisions, as indicated in the report of the GEPW (E/ECE/1440, para. 11).

Monitoring of follow-up to decisions of the Commission
(as of 30 November 2005)

(Decisions already implemented and indicated as such in the former version have been removed from this table since they no longer need to be monitored.)

Decision	Responsible	Status	Actions taken	Reference to document / meeting
2005				
2) The Commission recognized the need for follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development in the UNECE region and the need to pursue implementation of the commitments made at the Conference.	Economic Analysis Division	Continuing	UNECE collaborated with DESA in organizing the first meeting of the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters (to take place in Geneva in December 2005) and in providing substantive input to the background documents of the meeting.	
7) The Commission welcomed the report of the Executive Secretary and agreed that the UNECE should promote the use of ICT in the UNECE work programme with the aim of increasing its efficiency and efficacy on a demand-driven basis. The Commission furthermore stressed that ICT was a tool to implement the programme and not a goal in itself. In this connection the Commission encouraged Principal Subsidiary Bodies (PSBs) to further strengthen their efforts to develop and use appropriate e-applications in a cost-efficient manner and agreed to evaluate progress that had been made at the sixty-first Annual Session. The secretariat was urged to put all materials available in the three languages of the Commission on its website.	All	Continuing	The use of ICT in the UNECE work programme will be reported in a document to the 2006 Annual session	E/ECE/1443
8) The Commission adopted the recommendations of the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work concerning new programme planning processes. It also stressed the need for the secretariat to expedite the preparation of the guide on the evaluation methods as outlined in document E/ECE/1423.	Office of the Executive Secretary/ All Divisions	Continuing/ in progress	The planning process is under implementation. The strategic frameworks 2008-2009 are being prepared in accordance with the steps specified in the adopted document. The guide is under preparation.	E/ECE/1423

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<p>9) The Commission noted with interest the Executive Secretary's background document E/ECE/1424. It noted the success of the UNECE Beijing +10 review held in December 2004. Recalling that the meeting identified mainstreaming gender into economic policies as a key area requiring further efforts by member States, the Commission expressed its view that the UNECE should continue to mainstream gender into its work, as well as continuing to serve as a platform for the exchange of good practices. It further noted that gender equality is a common denominator for many of the internationally agreed development goals. With regard to the regional dimension of the internationally agreed development goals, the Commission noted with appreciation that the UNECE is involved in regional activities having an impact on the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. The Commission also noted the linkages discussed in section III of the background document between UNECE activities and a number of major internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration.</p>	<p>OES/Human settlements/ Statistics/ Population Activities Unit</p>	<p>Continuing</p>	<p>Mainstreaming gender into economic policies in SPECA countries as a follow up to UNECE Beijing +10 Review and MDGs; a new working group on gender will be set up, with a preparatory meeting of the group to be held in December 2005. A joint initiative with UNESCAP.</p> <p>Mainstreaming gender into WSIS; High-level Round Table on Building a Gender Sensitive Information Society (Tunis, 16 November 2005); a joint event of regional commissions coordinated by UNECE and UNESCWA</p> <p>The UNECE Generations and Gender Programme is collecting data and providing analyses needed for better consideration of the gender aspect in different policy areas.</p>	
<p>10) The Commission noted with appreciation the analysis of the Executive Secretary in respect of UNECE challenges at the global and regional level. While noting the description of the UNECE's responses to those challenges, particularly those supporting the less advantaged economies, it highlighted the need to address aspects of issues such as globalization, transition and environmental policies within the scope of UNECE's mandate. Furthermore, the Commission reconfirmed that the setting of priorities of the Commission rests with the member States and that the overall objective within the UNECE remains the promotion of stability and prosperity across the UNECE region.</p>	<p>All, including member States</p>	<p>Continuing</p>	<p>Member States are setting the priorities and directions of UNECE through the reform and its follow-up.</p>	

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<p>11 (d) Having considered the proposal contained in paragraphs 21 and 22 of E/ECE/1426, the Commission agreed to encourage participation of non-UNECE countries which are Contracting Parties to legal instruments administered by WP.1 and the other subsidiary bodies of the Inland Transport Committee but was unable to reach consensus on granting voting rights to such countries at this point. It recognized the need for further discussion.</p>	Transport Division	In progress	Subsequent to the Commission session, the Transport Division, at the request of the US Mission, prepared a note on the Conventions concerned by the decision. The note was transmitted to the US Mission for comments. No answer has been received so far.	
<p>(e) The Commission also thanked the Chairpersons of the UNECE's Principal Subsidiary Bodies for their work and presentations. It urged the secretariat, PSBs and all member States to continue to improve both horizontal and vertical communications.</p>	All, including member States	In progress	An initial set of measures has been undertaken (see report of GEPW chairman for annual session 2006)	E/ECE/1440
<p>12 (a) The Commission reiterated the importance of the UNECE technical cooperation activities, which should be demand-driven and results oriented. It welcomed action taken by the secretariat to implement the Technical Cooperation Strategy endorsed at its 2004 Annual Session. The Commission stressed the need to increase assistance to low-income countries in a targeted and systematic manner. The Commission welcomed the efforts of the UNECE secretariat carried out in close partnership with UNESCAP to strengthen its support to economic cooperation and development in Central Asia, in particular work aimed at strengthening the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA).</p>	All, in particular Technical Cooperation Unit (TCU)	Continuing	The secretariat's Technical Cooperation (TC) work was guided by the TC Strategy. In 2005 more attention was given to low-income countries of the region. Particular focus was given to strengthening and reform of SPECA. This included elaboration, jointly with ESCAP, of a new SPECA Work Plan for 2005-2007 and development of two projects funded from UN Development Account in support of Central Asian countries in the areas of trade and statistics.	
<p>12 (b) The Commission also encouraged the development of joint technical cooperation projects in cooperation with other organizations. It emphasized the importance of the work of the Regional Advisers in supporting technical cooperation activities in the fields of environment, transport, statistics, energy, trade, entrepreneurship and SMEs, and development policy.</p>	All, in particular TCU	In progress	The Transport Division is implementing jointly with the other UN regional commissions a UNDA Project on Capacity Building in developing Inter-regional Transport Links, with	ENERGY/2005/2

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			<p>particular focus on Euro-Asian transport links.</p> <p>Joint energy projects with UNDP, GEF, CIS, ESCAP under Regional Energy Advisory Services</p> <p>Three Development Account projects were developed: on trade (jointly with ESCAP and UNCTAD), on statistical capacity building (with DESA) and on ICT for development (jointly with other regional commissions). All these projects were approved by the General Assembly. In addition, steps were undertaken to strengthen cooperation with CAREC, a joint programme involving all major international financial institutions and UNDP in Central Asia. Work is underway to strengthen cooperation with UNDP and other organizations.</p> <p>Allocation of regional advisers to be reviewed by member States.</p>	
<p>12 (c) The Commission recognized UNECE's potential in delivering technical assistance in those areas where it has expertise and comparative advantages, and encouraged OECD and other donor organizations to better utilize this potential in their development aid efforts.</p>	TCU	Continuing	<p>Consultations were launched with the OECD Secretariat and member States of OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) with a view to adding UNECE to the DAC list of international organizations, contributions to which could be reported as ODA.</p>	

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2003				
<p><u>UNECE's achievements and constraints</u></p> <p>The Commission expressed its satisfaction with the work of the PSBs. The following points were also underlined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All PSBs already regularly review their strategic directions and review their priorities and activities. However, some future streamlining and restructuring of the subsidiary bodies and related groups need also to be considered, to ensure their continued relevance and effectiveness. • Decision-making by the Commission would be assisted by evaluations of the effectiveness and impact of UNECE's work. • Gender issues need to be further incorporated into the work of all subprogrammes. 	<p>All Divisions</p> <p>All</p> <p>OES</p>	<p>Continuing</p> <p>Continuing</p> <p>Continuing</p>	<p>Review of strategic directions, priorities and activities is carried out on a regular basis.</p> <p>Evaluations are carried out every biennium on selected areas of work</p> <p>A Regional symposium on mainstreaming gender into economic policies, organized with DAW/OSAGI (January 2004)</p> <p>Mainstreaming gender into UNECE work on SMEs under WP.8:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forum of Women Entrepreneurs (Geneva, March) and sub-regional workshops; - Publication on women's entrepreneurship in Eastern Europe and CIS (Sales No E.03.II.E.3) <p>Mainstreaming gender into UNECE support to WSIS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Side-event at WSIS (Geneva, December 2003) organized jointly with UNDP and UNIFEM 	

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<p><u>Preparations for and follow-up to World and Regional Conferences</u></p> <p>A number of points were made during the discussion, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In regard to follow-up to the Ministerial Conference on Ageing (MiCA) Berlin, UNECE should play an active role in networking, facilitating information exchange, through seminars and round tables and collecting data and preparing analysis, while avoiding duplication with the activities of other organizations; 	Population Activities Unit	Continuing	The secretariat has established a network of national focal points on ageing and a database on member States' actions related to population ageing. The secretariat participates in the task force for MiCA follow-up, which has organized 3 technical workshops and supervises development of a system of indicators for monitoring the Regional Implementation Strategy.	
<p><u>UNECE technical cooperation activities</u></p> <p>The following points were underlined:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical cooperation activities should be demand-driven and action oriented, with emphasis given to less advanced, low-income countries with economies in transition; Technical cooperation activities in relation to South Caucasus as well as to Central Asia, in the framework of the Special Programme for Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), should be strengthened; The secretariat needs to find new ways for fundraising; possibly through better channelling of information to potential donors, including by sending information on project proposals to missions in Geneva and inviting financial support from donor governments as well as from the private sector; 	<p>All Divisions and TCU</p> <p>All Divisions and TCU</p> <p>All Divisions and TCU</p>	<p>Continuing</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Implemented</p>	<p>All elements of this decision were subsequently reflected in the UNECE TC Strategy endorsed in 2004 (see above).</p> <p>The Astana Conference (May 2005) strengthened cooperation among SPECA member countries through a reform of SPECA and the extension of its activities and working groups</p> <p>New funds raised: Energy Efficiency 21 accorded \$2 million UN Foundation \$2.5 million MAE/FFEM \$3 million UNEP/GEF Global Environment Facility</p>	<p>ENERGY/WP.4 /2005/2 /2005/3 /2005/8 /2006/1</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular provision of information on ongoing technical assistance projects would contribute to improving transparency. In this respect, member States were informed of a new UNECE website on technical cooperation where information on trust funds and project proposals is made available; • Financial assistance should be made available to low-income countries with economies in transition to enable them to participate in UNECE activities such as workshops and seminars; • Evaluation of technical cooperation activities, though recognized as being difficult and complex and requiring resources, is important and necessary; • Any increase in technical cooperation activities should not draw resources away from the core activities of UNECE, in particular the standard setting work. 	<p>TCU</p> <p>All Divisions</p> <p>All Divisions and TCU</p> <p>All</p>	<p>Continuing</p> <p>Continuing</p> <p>Continuing</p> <p>Continuing</p>	<p>Regular provision of information: A report on technical cooperation activities is made to each session of the Committee on Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development</p> <p>Financial assistance is usually made available through extrabudgetary funding from member States.</p> <p>Practical steps for evaluation include: standard evaluation form for TC workshops was developed and is now used by UNECE Divisions; results of evaluations are available on UNECE Website; all new UNDA Projects include provisions for evaluation; external evaluation on UNECE Regional Advisory Programme was commissioned in Autumn 2005.</p>	<p>TRADE/2005/15</p> <p>www.unece.org/operact/opera/eval.html</p>
<p><u>Formal segments of the Ad Hoc Informal meetings of the Commission</u></p> <p>26 June 2003 (Report on the Formal Segment can be found in E/ECE/1407)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Commission endorsed the recommendations of the GEPW in respect of actions 8 and 9 (regarding monitoring and evaluation of technical cooperation) mentioned in the paper on UNECE reform (E/ECE/1399) 	<p>All Divisions and TCU</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>For monitoring, steps were undertaken to improve the format of annual overview reports on TC activities, along with steps to improve the content of the part of the UNECE Website. See also above.</p>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Commission adopted the proposed Guidelines for teams of specialists on the understanding that it would be explained to PSBs that they are required to set the procedure for the establishment of teams of specialists. 	All Divisions	Continuing	<p>For evaluation, see last comment on previous page.</p> <p>In 2005 the Committee on Trade, Industry and Enterprise(CTIED) approved a list of under-funded technical cooperation areas (see annex to TRADE/2005/15)</p> <p>Guidelines to be adjusted as foreseen by the Work Plan on ECE Reform</p> <p>The CTIED has adopted procedures for the review of its subgroups that are completely aligned with those approved by the Commission (see TRADE/2005/19). The Committee reviewed its subgroups according to these procedures in 2005 as reflected in its report (see ECE/TRADE/360, paragraph 40)</p> <p>The procedure in force for the Timber subprogramme was reviewed during the strategic review and is in line with the UNECE Guidelines, which are distributed to all team members when they start work. Time limited mandates, methods and expected outputs, as well as membership, for all 7 teams are available on the timber website.</p>	<p>E/ECE/1434</p> <p>TRADE/2005/19</p> <p>ECE/TRADE/360 para. 40</p>

Abbreviations

CAREC	Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
DAW/OSAGI	Division for the Advancement of Women/Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women
DESA	Department of Economic and Social Affairs
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEPW	Group of Experts on the Programme of Work
ICT	Information and communication technologies
MAE-FFEM	French Ministry of Foreign Affairs- Fonds français pour l'environnement mondial
MiCA	Ministerial Conference on Ageing
ODA	Official development assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
RPTC	Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation
SPECA	United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia
TCU	Technical Cooperation Unit
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDA	United Nations Development Account
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society