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UNECE TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IN 2005: AN OVERVIEW *

Note by the Executive Secretary

Executive summary

The note contains an overview of 2005 technical cooperation activities, including the work done by UNECE Regional Advisers, and UNECE's cooperation with sub-regional country groupings and initiatives, as well as with other United Nations agencies and regional organizations. It also provides an update on efforts taken to have the UNECE included on the OECD's "DAC List of Main International Organizations".

INTRODUCTION

1. Technical cooperation is an important supporting instrument for implementing the UNECE core programme activities and, as underscored by the 2005 Work Plan on ECE Reform, forms an integral part of the ECE activities. It has to focus on the countries with economies in transition and has to be demand driven, concentrating on the sectors where UNECE has in-house expertise and comparative advantage over other organizations.

* Late submission due to delay in the decision on the dates and agenda of the annual session of the Commission, pending the conclusion of the UNECE reform.

2. In 2005, UNECE technical cooperation activities focused on assisting countries with economies in transition of the UNECE region in the application of agreed norms and standards, and implementation of relevant recommendations and legally binding instruments through strengthening their national institutional and human capacities, and supporting the development and implementation of relevant national policies and actions. It also aimed at helping interested countries in addressing cross-border and sub-regional issues of mutual interest, which are relevant to the UNECE mandate and programme of work.
3. In 2005, the UNECE Technical Cooperation Unit and the Secretarial Working Group on Technical Cooperation continued their work with a view to promoting inter-divisional cross-sectoral cooperation and synergies; elaborating proposals aimed at facilitation and coordination of fund-raising activities; and identifying ways of strengthening and raising the effectiveness of technical cooperation work with sub-regional groupings and initiatives, in particular the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). It also addressed matters related to improving reporting, monitoring and evaluation. Measures were undertaken to improve communication and interaction with the UNECE member States on technical cooperation issues, which included special briefings for the Group of Experts on the Programme of Work. Efforts were undertaken to strengthen cooperation with other organizations and programmes involved in technical cooperation activities in the UNECE region, in particular UNDP, Asian Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, World Bank, as well as with the Stability Pact and OCSE.
4. Further steps were taken aimed at raising the overall effectiveness of the UNECE technical cooperation work and enhancing the contribution of UNECE, along with other United Nations regional commissions, to broader efforts of the international community in supporting countries to implement internationally agreed developmental goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This done was in the context of the on-going review of technical cooperation in the UN carried out as part of the overall reform of the Organization, as well as follow-up to the 2004 Comprehensive Triennial Policy Review of the Operational Activities for Development.
5. In 2005, technical cooperation activities were implemented by regular UNECE staff as well as by the Regional Advisers. As in earlier years the prevailing means of implementing technical cooperation services have been capacity-building workshops, seminars, study tours, policy advisory services and field projects. The main sources of funding were the resources made available for UNECE from the UN Regular Budget (mainly the Regular Programme for Technical Cooperation and the UN Development Account), and extrabudgetary resources, as well as various ad hoc and in-kind contributions.

I. TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED BY THE UNECE REGIONAL ADVISERS (see also E/ECE/1441/Add.1)

6. In 2005, the activities of the Regional Adviser on **Sustainable Energy** were concentrated on the development and implementation of the following capacity building and energy efficiency projects: Energy Efficiency 21; Financing Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Investments for Climate Change Mitigation in Selected Countries of Southeast and East Europe, as well as CIS Countries; Regional (inter-state) Programme of Rational and Efficient Use of Fuel and Energy Resources in CIS Countries; Capacity Building for Air Quality Management and the Application of Clean Coal Combustion Technologies in Central Asia (UNDA project jointly

implemented with the Regional Adviser on Environment); Biomass Energy for Heating and Hot Water Supply in Belarus; Removing Barriers to Energy Efficiency Improvements in the State Sector in Belarus; Improvement of Energy Efficiency in Public Sector (Schools and Hospitals) of Belarus; Support and Development of Renewable Sources of Energy (Biomass) in Ukraine; Energy Efficiency Service Market for Industrial and Commercial Sectors of the Russian Federation (EESM); Removing Barriers to Energy Efficiency in Municipal Heat and Hot Water Supply in Kazakhstan, phase "C". Advisory services were also provided on the development of renewable sources of energy in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine and on realising the concept of the energy service company to Belarus, as well as on the development of the Energy and Water Efficiency Demonstration Zones in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine with a view to transforming them into energy service companies.

7. The activities of the Regional Adviser on **Entrepreneurship and SMEs** were focused on the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for SME Development, strengthening institutional setup for start-up entrepreneurs, promotion of youth entrepreneurship, implementation of standards of good governance for SMEs in the UNECE region and sub-regional cooperation in the area of entrepreneurship. In particular, he helped organize and run a study tour in Hungary (Budapest, April 2005), in cooperation with the Government of Germany, for high-level government officials, heads of SME support institutions and associations of entrepreneurs from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The aim was to learn from the experience and practice of Hungary, as an example of a former centrally planned country that has successfully transformed its political and economic system to a market economy. Advisory services were provided during an Advisory workshop on business incubation (Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro, April 2005), the Inauguration meeting of the research and development partnership Network of Universities in countries of Central and Eastern Europe dealing with entrepreneurship research and education (Budapest, April 2005), and a BSEC/UNECE/KAF Workshop on "Developing sustainable SMEs – vision and reality" (Bucharest, Romania, June 2005).

8. Most of the activities of the Regional Adviser on **Environment** were focused on the development and implementation of water-related projects and activities, advising on the development of national environmental policies and sub-regional cooperation, as well as supporting the implementation of the UNECE environment conventions. The activities include projects on the Establishment of a Bilateral Kazakh-Kyrgyz Water Commission on the Rivers Chu and Talas, Central Asian Regional Water Information Base, Capacity Building for Air Quality Management and the Application of Clean Coal Combustion Technologies in Central Asia (UNDA project jointly implemented with the Regional Adviser on Sustainable Energy), Dam Safety in Central Asia, Transboundary Cooperation and Sustainable Management of the Dneestr River, Modernization of governance systems in the fields of health, water and waste management in the South Caucasus, Capacity for Water Cooperation (a series of workshops on transboundary water cooperation for EECCA countries), Application of the UNECE Environmental Impact Assessment Convention in Central Asia, and participation in the Environmental Performance Review of the Republic of Moldova. Most of the projects were planned and implemented in collaboration with other partners such as UNESCAP, UNEP and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The Regional Adviser was also engaged in and advised on the development of national environmental policies and sub-regional cooperation, and on the development of the Environmental Strategy for the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia regions, the EU Water Initiative and the Central Asian Initiative for Sustainable Development.

9. The activities of the Regional Adviser on **Development and Policy issues** continued to focus on advisory services on implementation of the UN Secretary-General's initiative to strengthen the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). In March 2005 he participated in the preparation, conduct and follow-up of the joint visits of the Executive Secretaries of UNECE and UNESCAP to Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. He helped to prepare and run the International Conference on Strengthening Sub-regional Economic Cooperation in Central Asia and the Future Role of SPECA (May, Astana). He provided advisory assistance to the initiators from Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan of a SPECA Network of Economic Research Institutes, inter alia through consultations in Almaty (June and November), and in Baku (December). Advisory services on the role of SPECA in strengthening sub-regional stability were provided in June 2005 at the Third Annual Almaty Conference on Problems of Security and Regional Cooperation. In November 2005, he participated in the 4th Ministerial Meeting of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation (CAREC) in Bishkek, where consultations took place with the Asian Development Bank on the establishment of a coordinating framework between SPECA and CAREC; he also provided advisory services at the meeting of the SPECA Project Working Group (PWG) on Water and Energy Resources in Almaty and participated in consultations on more active UNDP involvement in SPECA projects at the Bratislava Regional Support Centre of UNDP. In December 2005, he participated in the preparation and running of the first session of the SPECA Coordinating Committee in Baku. He provided advisory services at the first meeting of the SPECA PWG on ICT for Development (Baku, December) and participated in the consultations on preparations for the first SPECA Economic Forum to take place in June 2006, in Baku. He continued to act as a Contact Point for Cooperation with the OSCE. In that capacity he prepared and chaired the second Expert Meeting on a Joint UNECE-OSCE Early Warning Mechanism in the Economic and Environmental Dimension of Security (Geneva, 2005) and delivered a report on that topic to the Economic and Environmental Sub-committee of the OSCE in June 2005. As a Contact Point for Cooperation with the Central European Initiative (CEI) he conducted a number of working level consultations on more active involvement of UNECE in CEI programmes during the CEI Summit Economic Forum in Bratislava, November 2005.

10. The activities of the Regional Adviser on **Statistics** were concentrated on assisting economies in transition in the implementation of international statistical standards and statistical capacity building. In particular, advisory services to statistical capacity building were provided to Albania in assessment of the national statistical system; to UNMIK on the planned population census; to Georgia on the revision of the law on official statistics and on population statistics; to The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on the revision of the law on official statistics; to the Republic of Moldova and to Ukraine on the measurement of non-observed economy in national accounts; to the Russian Federation on international migration statistics; to Turkmenistan on gender aspects of employment and income; to CIS countries on MDG-related health statistics, and on the compilation of industrial production indices in cooperation with the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS and the Federal Service of State Statistics of the Russian Federation. Advisory services were also provided during a training session on international migration statistics (Geneva, January 2005), an expert group meeting on human rights indicators organized by the University of Turku and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (Turku, Finland, March 2005), and the International Conference on the Strengthening of Sub-regional Economic Cooperation in Central Asia and the Future of SPECA (Astana, May 2005).

11. The activities of the Regional Adviser on **Trade Facilitation** concentrated on providing advisory services to the transition economies of: (a) South-East Europe, in particular within the SECI/Stability Pact framework, namely, support for the network of trade facilitation bodies (SECIPRO); contributions with policy papers and projects within the Working Group on Trade Liberalization and Facilitation; and promotion of Recommendation 33 (Single Window) and other trade facilitation recommendations of UN/CEFACT, the “UNeDocs” project; exploring possibilities for capacity-building and pilot projects; organization of a Workshop on WTO Accession and Trade Facilitation in Belgrade, Serbia and Montenegro; and support for the e-South Eastern Europe Initiative (eSEE) of the Stability Pact for SEE, by initiating and organizing a SEE regional Ministerial Meeting (Thessaloniki, July 2005); (b) the Caucasus and Central Asia regions: seminars on trade facilitation and WTO in support of UNECE international standards for trade facilitation (Baku, April 2005 and Tbilisi, November 2005); (c) Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova through organizing a major regional seminar on Trade Facilitation (Kiev, October 2005) contributing to the eventual launch of several trade facilitation projects.

12. The activities of the Regional Adviser on **Transport** were concentrated on providing advisory services to transition economies under the SPECA project on Development of Transport Infrastructure and Border-Crossing Facilitation; Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) and Trans-European Railway (TER) projects and the elaboration of their Master Plan; UNDA project on Capacity Building in Developing Interregional Land and Land-Cum-Sea Transport Linkages; and other projects related to the development of Pan-European transport corridors and Euro-Asian transport links. Assistance was provided with EU funding to experts from the Central Asian and Caucasus countries to facilitate their participation in the meetings of the Inland Transport Committee and selected subsidiary bodies. Advisory services were aimed at promoting cooperation with the private sector within the PPP concept for assistance in project implementation. Advisory services aimed at promoting the UNECE legal instruments in the field of transport were provided, in particular during the UN-OHRLLS High-level Meeting on the Role of International, Regional, and Sub-regional Organizations for the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action for transit transport cooperation (Almaty, March 2005); the Meeting of the OSCE Economic Forum (Prague, Czech Republic, May 2005); the Meeting of OSCE Economic and Environmental Sub-Committee of the Permanent Council (Vienna, October 2005); the Preparatory Conference to the fourteenth OSCE Economic Forum on the role of transportation to enhance regional economic cooperation and stability (Dushanbe, Tajikistan, November 2005); the EUROMED Training Seminar on International Road Haulage in the EuroMed Region (Istanbul, December 2005); the first Expert Group session on transport infrastructure created as a follow-up to the EU-Black Sea-Caspian Basin Baku Ministerial Conference (Kiev, December 2005) and the advisory workshop on the UNECE legal instruments in the field of transport and related infrastructure and border-crossing developments in Southeast Europe (Thessaloniki, December 2005).

13. Overall, the level of expenditures for technical cooperation activities carried out by the Regional Advisers in 2005 under the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation remained at approximately the same level as 2004. Expenditures incurred under this programme include salaries and related costs (i.e. entitlements and separation/repatriation costs) of Regional Advisers as well as costs of regional advisory travel.

14. The sectoral structure of financial resources spent from Section 23 of the Regular Budget in 2004 and 2005 is given in Table 1. The majority of resources (37-40%) were spent on

advisory services under the mandates of the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development (two Regional Advisers were counted under this broad area) followed by the activities mandated by other Committees. The same distribution was observed in the whole biennium 2002-2003.

Table 1. Sectoral structure of expenditures of the resources available from the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation for Regional Advisory activities

Sub-programme	2004-2005 ¹		2004 ²		2005 ³	
	\$	%	\$	%	\$	%
Environment	373,611	14	182,204	14	191,407	14
Transport	398,482	15	213,755	16	184,727	13
Statistics	382,495	14	184,642	14	197,854	14
Sustainable energy	414,647	15	206,688	15	207,959	15
Trade development ⁴	483,252	18	340,974	26	142,278	10
Industrial restructuring and enterprise development ⁵	553,172	20	191,852	14	361,320	26
Management of technical cooperation activities ⁶	105,147	4	14,163	1	90,984	7
Total	2,710,807	100%	1,334,277	100%	1,376,529	100%

¹ Actual expenditures in 2004-2005

² Actual expenditures in January-December 2004

³ Actual expenditures in January-November 2005

⁴ Includes the salary of the Regional Adviser on Development and Policy Issues in 2004

⁵ Includes the salary of the Regional Adviser on Development and Policy Issues in 2005, and activities of the Regional Adviser on Entrepreneurship and SMEs in 2005 (6 months)

⁶ Travel for advisory services on Development and Policy Issues

15. Details on the advisory missions undertaken by the Regional Advisers in 2005 are presented in Table 1 of E/ECE/1441/Add.1. The total number of such missions in 2005 (104) was slightly higher than in 2004 (92). In addition to the resources available under Section 23 of the Regular Budget, part of the missions was covered from extrabudgetary resources. In many cases the advisory services provided in a country mentioned in that table concern not only that country but a number of other countries covered by a particular multi-country and/or sub-regional project or activity. Details on the beneficiary countries can be found in the third column of the table.

II. UNECE TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT (UNDA)

16. During 2005, UNECE was involved in the implementation of three projects financed from UNDA: (a) Capacity-building for air quality management and the application of clean coal combustion technologies in Central Asia (UNECE in cooperation with UNESCAP and UNEP; 2004-2006; \$680,000); (b) Capacity-building for sustainable utilization, management and protection of internationally shared groundwater in the Mediterranean region (UNESCWA, UNECA, UNECE, UNESCO and UNDESA; 2004-2006; \$360,000); and (c) Capacity-building in developing interregional land and land-cum-sea transport linkages (UNECE, UNESCAP, UNECLAC, UNECA and UNESCWA; 2002-2006; \$1,250,000). Two project proposals submitted for financing under the fifth UNDA tranche have been approved by the General Assembly in the context of the Programme Budget for 2006-2007: (a) Capacity-building in

support of trade integration, with emphasis on integrated trade information flow management and trade facilitation in Central Asia (UNECE in cooperation with UNESCAP and UNCTAD; 2006-2007, \$385,000); and (b) Strengthening the statistical capacity of Central Asian countries to monitor progress towards the MDGs (UNECE in cooperation with UNDESA and UNESCAP; 2006-2007, \$385,000).

III. UNECE TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECTS UNDER THE GENERAL AND LOCAL TECHNICAL COOPERATION TRUST FUNDS, AND OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES

17. A significant part of the UNECE technical cooperation activities in 2005 were financed from (a) contributions to the UNECE General Trust Funds (11) and Local Technical Cooperation Trust Funds/Projects (37); and (b) contributions from UNFIP and UNFPA (3). Details on these funds are provided in E/ECE/1441/Add.1.

18. In addition to a range of sectoral projects, UNECE is currently implementing an inter-sectoral capacity building project for the Russian forest sector, which takes advantage of availability of in-house expertise in various parts of the UNECE secretariat. More specifically it focuses on the following areas: trade and environment issues, including certification; direct support at the enterprise level; cross-sectoral work combining trade, transport, energy and environment issues; regional and interregional cooperation with local government, private sector, the academic community, and non-governmental organisations among others. As a result of the project, new areas of cooperation have been developed, in particular the sustainable trade of woody biomass for energy and CO₂ reduction.

19. Depending on the area and goals of specific projects, the implementation activities under these projects/activities were carried out either by regular staff or Regional Advisers, or both. Expenditures under these funds by sub-programme are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. UNECE technical cooperation projects under the general and local technical cooperation trust funds and other sources, expenditure by sector as at 1 November 2005

Sub-programmes	2004 ¹		2005 ²	
	US\$	%	US\$	%
1. Environment	4,571,478	59	4,361,157	57
2. Transport	1,118,544	14	1,125,239	15
3. Statistics	107,034	1	22,559	0
4. Economic analysis	547,467	7	162,539	2
5. Sustainable energy	408,417	5	553,447	7
6. Trade development	429,099	6	222,739	3
7. Timber	23,219	0	49,928	1
8. Human settlements	123,492	2	73,435	1
9. Industrial restructuring	78,014	1	692,053	9
Office of the Executive Secretary	281,126	4	362,330	5
Technical Cooperation Unit	42,399	1	14,738	0
Total	7,730,288	100	7,640,165	100

¹ Expenditures in January-December 2004

² Expenditures in January-November 2005

20. As seen from the above table the major part of resources in 2004 was spent on the environment (59%) and transport (14%) sub-programmes. This reflects the constant demands of the economies in transition for technical assistance on environmental and transport issues. In 2005, this pattern remained almost unchanged: the first two places were occupied by the same sub-programmes: environment (57%) and transport (15%).

21. In addition there were a number of technical cooperation activities supported by the resources of host countries/organizations, national and international donors, and private entities for projects/activities that were managed outside UNECE but where UNECE was involved in their implementation.

IV. TECHNICAL COOPERATION WITH SUB-REGIONAL COUNTRY GROUPINGS

22. Technical cooperation with the Permanent International Secretariat of the **Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC)** is based on the Cooperation Agreement signed in July 2001 and has been developed successfully in the areas of entrepreneurship and SMEs, and transport. In particular, advisory services were provided during the meeting of the BSEC Working Group on Transport and the meeting of the Ministers of Transport of the BSEC Member States, organized by the Greek Government (Thessaloniki, January 2005), as well as the Parliamentary Conference on the Wider Black Sea Region in the New European Architecture (Athens, April 2005). Advisory assistance was also provided during the BSEC/UNECE/KAF Workshop on “Developing sustainable SMEs – vision and reality” (Bucharest, June 2005).

23. Technical cooperation with the Inter-State Economic Committee of the Economic Union of the **Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)** is based on the Memorandum on Interaction signed in April 1997. While a substantial part of the UNECE technical assistance during 2005 was provided to the CIS member countries, cooperation with the CIS bodies was focused on energy issues, statistics and transport, in particular under the project on implementation of the regional (inter-state) programme of rational and efficient use of fuel and energy resources in CIS countries. A project on the improvement of compilation of industrial production indices in CIS countries was conducted in cooperation with the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS and the Federal Service of State Statistics of the Russian Federation. Advisory services were provided during the third IRU International conference on road transport “Integration in CIS road transport: past and future”; the fourth CIS Interparliamentary meeting on road transport (Moscow, March 2005); and the first Expert Group session on transport infrastructure created as a follow-up to the EU-Black Sea-Caspian Basin Baku Ministerial Conference (Kiev, December 2005).

24. As far as cooperation within the **SECI/Stability Pact for Southeastern Europe** framework is concerned, advisory services were provided under the SECIPRO and SECI/SP Business Advisory Council network, notably on the issues of implementation of international standards for trade facilitation and e-business; trade facilitation and security; the World Bank’s TTFSE (Trade and Transport Facilitation in Southeast Europe) project; the e-South Eastern Europe (eSEE) initiative and the Working Group on Trade Liberalization and Facilitation of the Stability Pact. A workshop assisting the process of accession of Serbia to WTO, trade facilitation and transit in Serbia and Montenegro was organized by the Regional Adviser (Belgrade, October 2005) in collaboration with the Agency for International Trade Information and Cooperation

(AITIC), the Serbian and Serbian and Montenegrin federal authorities in coordination with the Stability Pact.

25. Technical cooperation with the **International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (IFAS)**, based on the Memorandum of Understanding between UNECE, UNESCAP and IFAS signed on 3 June 2004, concentrated on implementation of activities on environment protection and sustainable development, rational use of water and energy resources, and dam safety.

26. Technical cooperation with the Permanent Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Commission of the **Europe-Caucasus-Asia Corridor (TRACECA)** focused on the organization of a number of capacity building seminars (in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan). In particular, advisory services were provided in the preparation and implementation of the TRACECA projects on trade facilitation and institution building and on training for freight forwarders.

27. Technical cooperation with the **EurAsEC (Eurasian Economic Community)** countries provides materials and advice for the development of a trade facilitation component of EurAsEC. In addition, consultations were held with EurAsEC regarding development possible cooperation in the areas of water and energy resources in support of SPECA.

28. Technical cooperation with the **GUAM** Group countries (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Republic of Moldova) included a UNECE technical assistance workshop on trade facilitation (Kiev, October 2005).

29. Technical cooperation with Mediterranean countries was promoted under the EU EUROMED Project through the introduction of the major UNECE legal instruments in the field of road transport in the framework of the EUROMED Training Seminar on International Road Haulage in the EuroMed region (Istanbul, December 2005).

V. UN SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA (SPECA)

30. Following the initiative by the UN Secretary-General, the Executive Secretaries of UNECE and UNESCAP continued consultations with the Governments of the SPECA member countries on strengthening the Programme during their visits to Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in March 2005. As a result of consultations with all SPECA member countries, the UNECE and UNESCAP secretariats developed a set of proposals for improving SPECA's institutional set-up, working methods and funding, as well for significantly broadening the scope of cooperation within its framework. These proposals, together with the UNECE-UNESCAP Work Plan for 2005-2007 in support of SPECA that contains 28 concrete projects and project proposals, were submitted for consideration to the International Conference on Sub-regional Economic Cooperation in Central Asia and the Future Role of SPECA (Astana, Kazakhstan, May 2005), and were subsequently approved at the Special session of the SPECA Regional Advisory Committee held after the Conference. New areas of technical cooperation activities under SPECA now include trade, statistics and ICT.

31. In 2005, within the framework of SPECA, advisory services were provided under the UNDA project on "Capacity-building for air quality management and the application of clean coal combustion technologies in Central Asia" and the project on "Development of transport

infrastructure and border-crossing facilitation". Project Working Group meetings were held: Transport and Border Crossing Facilitation (Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan, April 2005); Water and Energy Resources (Almaty, November 2005); inaugural session on ICT for Development (Baku, December 2005); and a preparatory meeting for the PWG on Gender and Economy (Geneva, December 2005).

V. COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

32. In providing technical assistance to the economies in transition, UNECE has continued its cooperation with other organizations of the United Nations family and regional organizations in order to improve synergy and avoid overlapping and duplication of activities. UNDP has been UNECE's partner in practically all areas of its technical cooperation activities. Specific actions were taken to further strengthen cooperation with UNDP, which included consultations with the UNDP Regional Support Centre in Bratislava and various UNDP country offices. In 2005, UNECE contributed to the preparation of the UNDP Human Development and Security Report for Central Asia as well as the UN Development Assistance Framework for the Republic of Moldova.

33. Close cooperation was continued with the other UN regional commissions, in particular with UNESCAP, within the SPECA framework and under the UNDA project on Capacity-building for air quality management and the application of clean coal combustion technologies in Central Asia. All five regional commissions cooperated in the implementation of another UNDA project on Capacity-building in developing interregional land and land-cum-sea transport linkages, for the implementation of which three Expert Group Meetings were jointly organized by ECE, ESCAP, ESCWA and ECA (Amman, Jordan, May/June 2005; Istanbul, 29 June 2005; and Rabat, Morocco, December 2005). UNESCWA, UNECA, UNECE, UNESCO and UNDESA also cooperated within the UNDA project on Capacity-building for sustainable utilization, management and protection of internationally shared groundwater in the Mediterranean region. Among non-UN regional organizations the major partners were the European Commission (EC) and OSCE.

34. The International Conference on Strengthening Sub-regional Economic Cooperation in Central Asia and the Future Role of SPECA, organized by the Government of Kazakhstan in cooperation with, and with the financial support of, UNECE, UNESCAP, UNDP, OSCE and the Government of Austria (Astana, Kazakhstan, May 2005) is a good example of successful cooperation between the various entities which involved both substantive and financial contributions from all sides.

35. On the whole, cooperation was further developed in the field of: sustainable energy (with UNDP, Global Environmental Facility (GEF), UN Foundation/UN Fund for International Partnerships (UNF/UNFIP), EC, and EBRD); environment and human settlements (UNDP, World Bank, UNEP, UNESCO, EC, OSCE, EBRD and EEA); statistics (United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, EC, Council of Europe, Eurostat and OSCE); trade facilitation (World Bank, UNCTAD, EC, World Customs Organization (WCO), WTO, and ICC); and transport (World Bank, EC, EBRD, ADB). On-going cooperation was also maintained with UNDESA and ILO.

**VI. THE QUESTION OF INCLUSION OF UNECE ON THE OECD DAC LIST
OF MAIN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS
TO WHICH BY DONORS MAY BE REPORTED AS ODA**

36. At its sixtieth annual session, the Commission encouraged OECD and other donor organizations to better utilize UNECE's potential in delivering technical assistance in their development aid efforts. In follow-up to this decision, the secretariat contacted the Secretariat of OECD with a request to include UNECE on the OECD Development Assistance Committee's List of Main International Organizations, contributions to which by donors may be reported as Official Development Assistance (ODA). At present, membership of UNECE includes about twenty countries with economies in transition, which are receiving technical cooperation assistance from UNECE. Most of these countries are included in the DAC List of Aid Recipients as "low-income" or "lower middle-income" countries. OECD subsequently informed UNECE that earmarked contributions by donors to the UNECE technical cooperation activities for use in ODA eligible countries can be recorded as bilateral ODA to the countries concerned channelled through UNECE. This information was circulated to all member States of UNECE who are also members of DAC. The secretariat nevertheless believes that it would be important for UNECE to be included on the OECD Development Assistance Committee's List of Main International Organizations and its request to UNECE member States, also members of DAC, to support this inclusion has been favourably received by several of them. The secretariat is following up on this with the member States concerned and the OECD and hopes that this matter will be addressed positively at the next updating of the list, which is expected to take place in Spring 2006
