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## UNECE GETS AWARD FOR SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

On 29 October, at the sixth Plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), held in Palermo, Italy, UNECE was granted the PAM Prize for its contribution towards the region's attainment of sustainable economic development and regional integration.

This award recognizes UNECE's strategic partnership with PAM (17 out of PAM's 27 members are UNECE member States), which entered a new phase last year following the Joint PAM and United Nations Conference on Trade and Productive Capacity that took place in Geneva in May 2010. The Conference ended with an agreement to undertake joint activities to support the region's development efforts in the areas of: (i) trade facilitation and electronic business; (ii) technical regulations and standardization policies; (iii) transport development; and, (iv) energy and water resources management.

In his speech, Sergio Piazzesi, Secretary-General of PAM, noted that the PAM Prize is granted annually to individuals and institutions that have "distinguished themselves in initiatives and activities, be they cultural, economic, social or academic, dedicated to the achievement of those principles and goals set by our Assembly and which are common to all people of goodwill".



Ján Kubiš, UNECE Executive Secretary, said that the award "speaks to UNECE's highest aspirations – showing that our actions matter, and that we can contribute to bringing about economic prosperity for all. This award also speaks to UNECE's commitment to forge partnerships with other organizations and other regions in order to enhance our mutual impact and effectiveness".

He reiterated UNECE's readiness to cooperate with PAM in setting up a joint programme of action to support economic development in the Mediterranean region, as called for by the Joint Conference. The UNECE-PAM strategic partnership, he noted, is all the more pertinent to overcome the mounting challenges facing the region in light of the global economic crisis and recent political developments. □



The Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean includes: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Portugal, Serbia, Slovenia, Syria, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia and Turkey.

*The list of individuals and organizations that received the PAM Prize 2011 is available at:  
<http://www.pam.int/default.asp?m=news&id=266>.*

## AARHUS CONVENTION MEMBERSHIP REACHES 45: ICELAND RATIFIES FAR-REACHING ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS TREATY



As of 20 October 2011, Iceland has become the latest country to ratify the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. This action raises the total number of Parties to the Convention to 45.

The Aarhus Convention is the world's most far-reaching treaty on environmental rights. It seeks to promote greater transparency and accountability among Government bodies by

guaranteeing public rights of access to environmental information, providing for public involvement in environmental decision-making and requiring the establishment of procedures enabling the public to challenge environmental decisions.

The Convention was adopted in Aarhus, Denmark, in June 1998 and signed by 39 European and Central Asian countries and the European Community. It entered into force in October 2001. Its Parties now include most of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and nearly all EU member States.

In his message to the recent Meeting of the Parties to the Convention held in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova, Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, recalled

that "the Aarhus Convention is one of the major results of the Rio Declaration adopted at the first Earth Summit nearly 20 years ago". In view of the forthcoming Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in June 2012, the Aarhus Convention is, in the words of the Secretary-General, "more important than ever",

particularly because its twin emphasis on environment and human rights helps us "involve the public", "keep Governments accountable" and "respond to many challenges facing our world, from climate change and the loss of biodiversity to air and water pollution". □

*For further information, please visit: <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/welcome.html> or contact Ella Behlyarova at: [ella.behlyarova@unece.org](mailto:ella.behlyarova@unece.org).*

## FOLLOW US ON "VKONTAKTE", THE RUSSIAN FACEBOOK!

UNECE recently created its own page on "Vkontakte", the Russian-language social network that gathers some 100 million users. UNECE thus expands its presence on social media, and offers an easy way to Russian-speaking audiences to follow its activities.

In order to get access to the full content of our page, you will need to register and create your personal account. After joining our followers, you will receive information about our activities in the daily news of your personal page.

The wall offers news about UNECE activities, events, meetings, new publications and videos. You can also share your impressions about these or ask questions directly on the wall.

So join us on "Vkontakte" to keep track of what UNECE has done, is working on and is planning to do. □

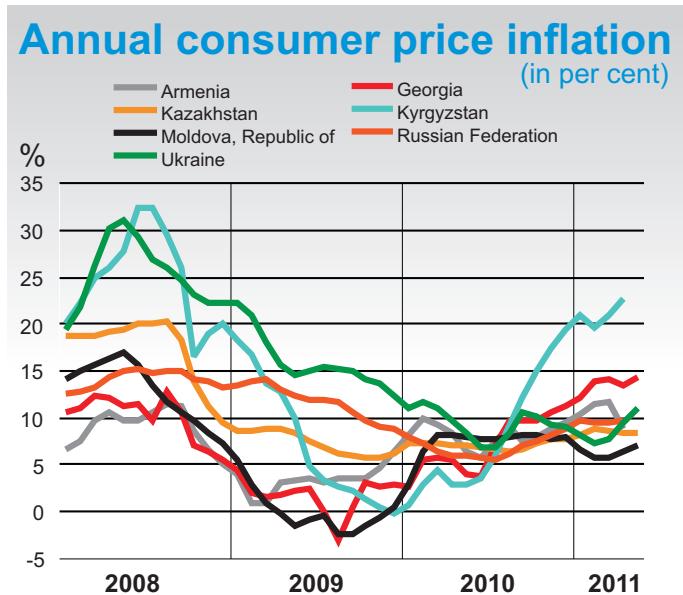
*To access the UNECE page, please go to: <http://vkontakte.ru/club30841301>.*

## FACTS AND FIGURES

### CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION SLOWED IN ECCA COUNTRIES

After the fall in consumer price inflation since mid-2008 in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, inflation rates in 2011 seem to have stabilized at a lower level in most of the countries.

Annual inflation rates peaked in mid-2008 with more than 30% in Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan, 15-20% in Kazakhstan, the Republic of Moldova and Russia, and 10-12% in Armenia and Georgia. With the exception of Armenia, consumer price inflation fell throughout 2009. Georgia and the Republic of Moldova experienced falling prices, also known as deflation, during some months of the year. During 2010, the inflation rates stopped falling and began trending upwards. In the first part of 2011, annual consumer price inflation rates were between 5% and 15% with the exception of Kyrgyzstan, which experienced inflation rates of about 20%. □



Source: UNECE Statistical Database (<http://www.unece.org/stats/data>). The consumer price index, growth rate over the same month of previous year.