

### Trade

## 20<sup>th</sup> UN/CEFACT Forum to advance global trade facilitation efforts

The 20<sup>th</sup> Forum of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT) opens on Monday, 17 September, at the Vienna University of Technology. Over 100 experts from all regions of the world will be participating in this 5-day event.

With its global remit, UN/CEFACT creates simple and transparent processes for global commerce. It draws up recommendations and standards in a public-private partnership with communities of experts to address a wide array of cross-sectoral and cross-border requirements.

Although much of UN/CEFACT's project work and supporting activities takes place in virtual meetings, the twice-yearly forums enable all the experts to come together in order to foster collaboration and develop new projects. Meetings focus on a wide range of issues such as: trade and transport facilitation, supply chain, regulatory, sectoral, and methodology and technology. Experts dealing with maintenance activities, e.g. UN/EDIFACT, also participate.

Special meetings and workshops are scheduled to address specific key topics, including e-procurement, traceability of agricultural products and guidelines on trade facilitation implementation. □

See more about UN/CEFACT and the Vienna Forum at: <http://www.unece.org/cefact.html>.



### Sustainable Energy

## Strong support for international cooperation in energy efficiency and cleaner energy at the International Forum: Energy for Sustainable Development



**Third International Forum: Energy for Sustainable Development**  
Capacity building for energy efficiency and access to cleaner energy in Central Asia and neighboring regions

**Үчүнчү Эл аралык Форуму: Туруктуу өнүгүштүн Энергетикасы**  
Бербордук Азия өлкөлөрүндөгү жана коңшулаш региондордун энергетикалык эффективдүүлүгүн өнүктүрүү жана таасир энергетикалык ресурстарга жол ачуу үчүн мүмкүнчүлүктөрдү чыңдоо

**Третий Международный Форум: Энергетика для устойчивого развития**  
Укрепление потенциала стран Центральной Азии и соседних регионов в целях продвижения энергоэффективности и расширения доступа к более чистой энергии

12-14 September 2012  
Kyrgyzstan, Issyk-Kul Lake

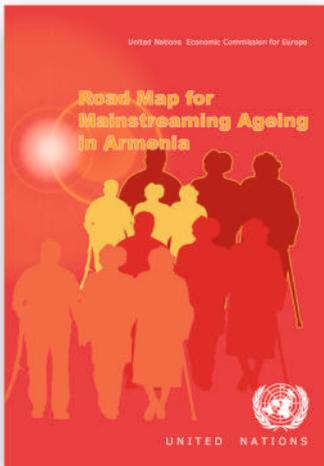
High-level officials and experts from countries of Central Asia and neighbouring regions meeting on 12-14 September 2012 at the International Forum "Energy for Sustainable Development" organized at the Issyk Kul Lake in Kyrgyzstan by the Government of Kyrgyzstan, UNDP/GEF, UNECE, and ESCAP have affirmed the critical role of international cooperation in improving energy efficiency and access to cleaner energy vital for sustainable and inclusive growth in accordance with the outcome of the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. This forum was third in a series of International Energy Efficiency Forums held in Central Asia since 2010.

The resolution adopted at the Forum, chaired by the Deputy Minister of Energy and Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic Mr. Aibek Kaliev, underlined that sustainable use of energy, improved energy efficiency and wider access to cleaner energy are critically important for economic and social development. "We express confidence that widening a continued international dialogue in Central Asia and neighbouring regions will facilitate solution of common problems in energy sector and related areas," says the resolution. The participants acknowledged "the significance of further improving the investment climate in the countries of Central Asia and neighbouring regions, including through the development of financial mechanisms stimulating implementation of the projects in sustainable use of energy, energy efficiency and wider access to cleaner energy, and facilitation of their application, as well as ensuring transparency in the distribution of financial resources". It was recognized that "improving energy efficiency in the housing sector, one of the most energy intensive sectors, with direct impact on households, may become one of the main directions of international cooperation" in the region.

Taking place in the "International Year of Sustainable Energy for All" declared by the UN General Assembly, the Forum supported the United Nations Secretary General's "Sustainable Energy for All" Initiative, which aims to achieve universal access to modern energy services, double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency and double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix by 2030. With the theme "Capacity building for energy efficiency and access to cleaner energy in Central Asia and neighbouring regions", the Forum became a place to discuss the key elements of a strategy to improve energy efficiency and access to cleaner energy in Central Asia and

neighbouring countries, including policy, investments and market conditions. The specific roles of various stakeholders – governments, private sector, civil society, the UN system, and international financial institutions – were emphasized. □

## Ageing



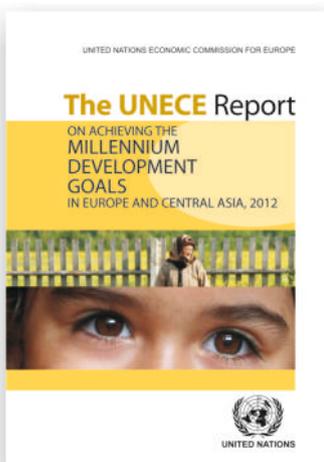
## Armenia adopts UNECE Road Map on Ageing

The Government of Armenia adopted a national Ageing Strategy and a related Action Plan in August 2012. Both documents benefited from the recommendations of the UNECE-developed Road Map on Mainstreaming Ageing. Based on an in-depth evaluation of the situation of older people living in Armenia and the related policy environment, the recommendations of the Road Map were designed to enhance implementation of international policy principles in the field of ageing, set out in the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its Regional Implementation Strategy.

In the framework of the Road Map development, UNECE assisted the Armenian Ministry of Labour and Social Issues in reviewing the draft Ageing Strategy and in developing the related Action Plan. In adopting an integrated Ageing Strategy that considers ageing-policies from all angles – be it the labour market, the education system, social protection or health care – the country follows an international trend to mainstream ageing into all policy areas. □

The Road Map on Mainstreaming Ageing for Armenia is available at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=30028>.

## Off the Press



## Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Europe and Central Asia, 2012

This report documents progress towards achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in the Pan-European region. It focuses on the former transition economies of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, but it also examines progress in all of the UNECE economies for several goals which still have not been achieved in the advanced economies of Western Europe and North America.

Generally the report finds that significant progress was being made in almost every area prior to the global financial crisis of 2008-2009, but the severe downturn during the crisis and sluggish recovery since 2009 has resulted in slower improvement. The crisis increased unemployment and poverty in much of the region and has significantly weakened government finances so that less is available for improving the educational and health infrastructure and in providing income maintenance for low income families.

The deteriorating sovereign debt situation in the advanced economies has resulted in a scaling back of official development assistance which is desperately needed in much of the developing world to close the financing gap for achieving the targets. Unfortunately the economic outlook for the coming year for the UNECE region is quite subdued, and some of the goals may not be achieved without a more focused effort by member States.

The report highlights that in the UNECE region poverty, hunger and lack of access to education and health care are not endemic to the general population as in much of the developing world, but are increasingly confined to marginalized groups including ethnic minorities, indigenous peoples and migrants, persons with disabilities, the long-term unemployed, and in a few cases, women and girls more generally. Thus government policy should concentrate on creating more equitable societies with better designed policies for reaching these disadvantaged groups.

For some targets, especially in the environmental area, lack of progress is more widespread and changes in policy and economy-wide activities are thus needed.

The report concludes with two special chapters that examine in more detail some specific aspects related to the MDGs. The first deals with data issues; being able to accurately quantify targets is central to their analysis and to formulating policy recommendations.

The second deals with population ageing in the region's emerging economies and its implications for the fiscal sustainability of social insurance systems; this presents a significant long-term challenge for the economic development of these economies. □

The report is available at: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=30736>.