Tajikistan to address regulatory and procedural barriers to trade based on UNECE recommendations

The Minister of Economic Development of Tajikistan, Sharif Rakhimzoda, met with UNECE Executive Secretary Sven Alkalaj on 10 February to discuss the results of a recent study, conducted by UNECE, on the regulatory and procedural barriers to trade in Tajikistan. The Minister presented the study’s conclusions at the 6th session of the Committee on Trade.

Tajikistan's accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2013 has triggered the adoption of a programme to adapt the country's economy to WTO rules and improve its performance in the World Bank’s Doing Business Classification, where it currently ranks 143 out of 189 countries.

The Minister said that the study's recommendations will help Tajikistan eliminate regulatory and procedural barriers to trade and create a more favourable investment and business climate in the country.

They will also help the country in its quest to achieve deeper regional and global economic integration and to inform partners and donors about what areas may need support and assistance.

The Government is currently finalizing plans to address the recommendations of the study covering improvements of border control systems, transparency, customs clearance, the use of electronic documents and the Single Window facility, regional cooperation, overland transport, logistical services, the SQAM system including technical regulation, standardization, conformity assessment, product certification and metrology.

The Minister stressed that Tajikistan is interested in exchanging information and experience in post-WTO accession measures with other countries in the region. In the Committee’s discussions, the possibility of working with neighbouring countries in Central Asia on regional analyses of regulatory and procedural barriers to trade was highlighted by several delegates.

UNECE will follow up on the study with support in developing project proposals through a UN Development Account project.

For more information, please visit: http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=34244.

UNECE to present photo exhibit “E 40 – Image of the Road” during the 76th session of its Inland Transport Committee

A photo exhibit depicting a journey along the 8,000 kilometre long E40 European Highway from Calais, France, to Riddar, in northeast Kazakhstan near the Russian and Chinese borders, will showcase how operational inland transport between Europe and Asia is becoming a reality. The exhibit will open during UNECE’s annual Inland Transport Committee (ITC) meeting on 25 February and will remain on display at the Palais des Nations through mid-March.

The project was developed by Helen Kirwan and Simon Pruciak. Together with architect Jarek Karpik, they travelled for 54 days from France to Kazakhstan and back during the summer of 2013 as part of a research project to visually document the route along the iconic E40 European Highway, which passes through France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The E40 European Highway was the first, and the longest, of a series of trans-continental routes conceived by the United Nations after the Second World War under a plan to assist Europe’s regeneration and develop international communication and transport links.

The artists recorded daily movements along the road, ambient sounds, conversations and interviews at service stations. Through the video material, they captured various conscious and unconscious experiences, the real and the virtual, so that the viewer can become involved in and share the experience of the E40.

Parts of the E40 follow prehistoric ancient pathways and sections of the so-called silk
Building networks to support women entrepreneurs in Central Asia and South Caucasus

Building networks at national and regional level is essential to support women in establishing or expanding their businesses. How to use networking as a tool for action and success was one of the main topics discussed at the International Workshop Support Systems for Women in Small Businesses, which took place in Haifa, Israel, from 3 - 30 January, 2014.

It was the 19th workshop organized by the Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Center (MCTC) in cooperation with MASHAV (Israel’s Agency for International Development Cooperation to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and UNECE. 22 women and men from government institutions and SME support agencies, NGOs dealing with small business support and development, women’s business associations and academia, widened their knowledge of support systems for small-scale entrepreneurs as a tool for regional and local development.

Workshop participants received training in marketing, advertising, project management, human resource management, technological incubators and business models. They addressed ways in which new technologies can influence small business management, discussed negotiation skills, business thinking development and creativity in business. At a Roundtable, participants shared their experience on the existing support systems in their countries and discussed current obstacles to women entrepreneurs in their regions. A range of common barriers, such as lack of financing, shortages of information and transparency, were highlighted. Participants developed proposals for joint projects as a tool for networking and disseminating information and support to national and local entrepreneurs.

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Armenia joins the EMEP Protocol


The Protocol is a cost-sharing mechanism for EMEP, which provides sound scientific support to the work of the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, particularly in collecting emission data, measuring air quality in remote and rural areas and modelling atmospheric transport and deposition of air pollutants. EMEP also evaluates emission scenarios, including their long-term costs and economic benefits. Contributions to EMEP enable countries to benefit from its information-sharing exercises and to participate in joint modelling work, which helps them identify their emission reduction targets under the Convention and its protocols, and to develop and implement national air pollution control measures and actions across regions.

At present, about 200 monitoring stations in Europe participate in EMEP. There are also monitoring sites established in accordance with EMEP requirements in Kazakhstan and the Republic of Moldova, though these countries are not yet Parties to the EMEP Protocol. Armenia’s accession is especially welcome, as the Parties to the Convention have recognized that the stronger involvement of the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia — both in its scientific activities and also in the implementation of the key protocols to the Convention — is crucial to ensuring reliable emission data across the region, and allowing measures to abate air pollution to be identified. For that reason, a number of Parties are providing additional resources to fund a capacity-building programme for the countries of the subregion on their way to accession and implementation to the Convention and its protocols.

See where the 200 monitoring stations are located: http://www.nilu.no/projects/ccc/sitedescriptions/europe.html. Not an official record - For information only