



Economic Commission for Europe

TRADE/INFORMAL/2001/6
8 June 2001
English only

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT Fifth session (13-15 June 2001) Agenda item 3

Matters Arising from the Fifty-Sixth Session of the Economic Commission for Europe

1. The fifty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Europe took place in Geneva from 8 to 11 May 2001. During its session, decisions were taken in three areas that have a direct impact on the work and decisions to be made by the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development. These three areas are: increased policy coherence, strengthening intersectoral links within the ECE, and the United Nations' Millennium Declaration. The relevant discussions and decisions are summarised below.

Increased Policy Coherence

2. The Commission concluded that there was a need to strengthen the overall policy coherence between the Commission and its Principal Subsidiary Bodies (PSBs). To achieve this goal the Commission decided to establish a Steering Group to discuss overall the policy and direction of the ECE. This Steering Group will meet during the ECE's annual session and will include the Bureau of the ECE and the Chairs of all Subsidiary Bodies, including the Committee.

Strengthening Intersectoral Links within the ECE

3. The ECE concluded that, while intersectoral cooperation was very much needed for policy coherence, it did not occur spontaneously but needed planning and stimulation. It also noted that intersectoral activities should be carefully planned so as to avoid overburdening the PSBs and affecting their core activities.
4. As a result, PSBs were requested to examine the most efficient, flexible and cost-effective modalities to address intersectoral issues. Some suggestions were: joint meetings of the PSBs or their bureaux; the creation of joint groups of experts or task forces; the delegation of one member of a PSB to a meeting of another PSB; specific projects that are jointly implemented and monitored; and the establishment of web pages dedicated to the sharing of information on developments in intersectoral cooperation.
5. Areas where the Commission specifically requested the Committee for Trade, Industry and Enterprise Development to develop intersectoral cooperation are: border-crossing and trade facilitation; and Trade, Timber and Environment. In response, the secretariat has drafted short notes on both areas as found in annexes I and II.

6. PSBs were further requested to review annually already ongoing intersectoral cooperation and to consider potential new issues for such cooperation to be subsequently brought to the attention of other concerned PSBs, with decision thereon to be taken by the Commission. The Commission also encouraged PSBs to develop other cross-sectoral activities whenever opportunities present themselves. In this context, the Committee might want to consider identifying relevant intersectoral issues in the area of electronic commerce, investment, and enterprise development that could be pursued in the future.
7. PSBs were also encouraged to find new ways to secure the means for implementing intersectoral activities, including setting aside regular resources and seeking extrabudgetary funding for these activities.

The United Nations' Millennium Declaration

8. In 2000, at the United Nations' Millennium Summit, the heads of UN member States adopted the Millennium Declaration. This declaration contains a number of goals that both Member States and the United Nations are committed to accomplishing. In support of this process, the Commission held a roundtable to discuss the key policy concerns from the Declaration that are of relevance to the ECE region.
9. It then invited its Principal Subsidiary Bodies to consider what contribution they could make to the implementation process, and how to integrate the Millennium Declaration concerns and objectives into their programmes of work. In this context, issues that the Committee should pay particular attention to include: the development and the eradication of poverty; the use of information technology to support development; good governance; environmentally-friendly international trade and investment; and a greater involvement of civil society and, particularly NGOs, in the Committee's work.
10. The Commission further agreed to periodically review progress made towards implementing the Millennium Declaration, as it has been invited to do by the General Assembly.
11. In addition, the Commission highlighted the need, in the context of the Millennium Declaration for all PSBs to make special efforts to eliminate the negative consequences from the Chernobyl disaster.

ANNEX I

To be supplied

ANNEX II

To be supplied