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Technical assistance to countries with transition economies

2014 Technical Assistance activities in the field of Transport

Note by the secretariat

1. Technical assistance activities and missions are planned based on adopted biennium plans and in conformity with the mandates given by UNECE Member countries, either by the Inland Transport Committee or other levels of the United Nations.
2. Assistance in the field of transport is focused, but not limited to strengthening the capacity of countries of Eastern and South - Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia, in particular the landlocked countries. Furthermore, various types of assistance related to Transport Division scope of work are provided to the other member States. Technical assistance activities are aimed at acceding to and implementing United Nations legal instruments, norms and standards, transferring know-how as well as sharing best practices in transport.
3. The main principles defining technical assistance are that it should be: linked to UNECE's normative work, results oriented and demand driven as well as focused on the countries with economies in transition.
4. The “**ForFITS project**” funded from the 7th tranche of UNDA was completed in 2013. Project was managed by five regional commissions with UNECE as the leading implementation agency. The main objective was to enhance international cooperation and planning towards sustainable transport policies. ForFITS modeling tool was developed to assist users in the selection of the most appropriate and effective measures to reduce CO₂ emissions in the inland transport sector (including road, rail and waterways). Currently, on the basis of the implemented national and local pilot projects, preparatory work on development of new modules (off-road vehicles, road safety) and follow up to the national pilot projects is on-going.
5. The on-going UNDA 8th tranche global project “**Strengthening the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to facilitate legitimate border crossing, regional cooperation and integration**” will result in increased national

capacity to utilize international standard electronic messages in the field of transit procedures, in particular business-to-customs electronic information and increased capacity to exchange secure electronic transit information between customs of different countries. In UNECE region, Georgia accepted to become pilot country and appointed a project focal point. The assessment of the legal and technical needs of pilot country (gap-analysis) has been completed and findings are presented in the report. Preparation for the first inter-regional meeting scheduled for end 2014 is ongoing.

6. In **TEM and TER projects** a highly-professional new project management team has come on board in 2014. Regular activities of project bodies based on adopted action plans are under implementation. The final report of the **EATL Phase II** was adopted in February 2013 and the next phase of the project EATL Phase III has already started. Capacity building workshop on financing transport infrastructure was held in Geneva in September 2013.

7. One of the permanent area of capacity building carried out by the Transport Division are activities in **SPECA PWG-TBC**. In this period, focus of the activities was on **transport of dangerous goods** with the aim to promote accession to UNECE legal instruments and reduce the gap between being a Contracting Party of an international Convention or agreement and implementing them effectively. Capacity building workshop devoted to international transport of dangerous goods by road was held in Almaty (Kazakhstan) in October 2013.

8. Technical assistance in **road traffic safety** is related to implementation of the UN Decade of action for road safety (2011–2020). In this context UNECE has joined forces with the Government of the Republic of Serbia and Regional Cooperation Council (RCC) in organizing regional road safety capacity building workshop in Belgrade in October 2014. Targeted regional workshop, alongside with presentation of four road safety management related studies/reports, will cover topics of road safety management, establishment of a lead road safety agency, developing a national road safety strategy with realistic and long term targets, road safety funding sources and data support systems for monitoring and evaluation.

9. In 2013 regional capacity building workshops on **transit and border crossing facilitation** was held in Baku (Azerbaijan), Dubai (United Arab Emirates) and Beijing (the People's Republic of China). Furthermore, UNECE Transport Division has been involved in the several workshops and activities developed under OSCE Border Staff Management College in Dushanbe (Tajikistan) in February and May 2014. In cooperation with BSEC Member States implementation of the key UN multilateral trade and transport facilitation instruments was discussed as an effective tool to facilitate and harmonize the frontier controls and significantly reduce border waiting times.

10. In cooperation with **EuroMed Road, Rail and Urban Transport regional programme**, Transport Division was involved in preparation and delivery of trainings related to UNECE legal instruments in several Mediterranean countries. The EuroMed produced a publication "Main United Nations Road Transport Agreements" which was presented to ITC in 2014 and capacity building seminar on UNECE main road transport agreements and Transport Division activities will be held in Geneva on September 9th, 2014.

11. In August 2013, the Belarus Government asked the Transport Division to assist the Government to evaluate the existing **potential of transport and logistics system** and their contribution to better integration of the Republic of Belarus in international supply chains. The report "Review of the Transport and Logistics system of the Republic of Belarus" was published in February 2014 and it served as basis for national capacity building round table held in Minsk.

12. The core objective of the UNECE strategy on **Intelligent Transport Systems** is to promote new actions and policies where ITS improve the quality of life and make sustainable mobility available across borders. The UNECE Transport Division jointly with Belgium Federal Public Service for Mobility and Transport is organizing 2014's Flagship Round Table "Towards a future driving and transportation culture: technology innovations for safe, efficient and sustainable mobility" in Brussels on 17-18 November 2014.

13. On the basis of the assessment of decade of technical assistance in the field of transport 2002–2012 and funding of technical cooperation activities document (ECE/TRANS/2014/9) it is evident that wide spectrum of activities in capacity building are under implementation. The diversity of activities undertaken by senior staff of Transport Division and the regional adviser in the last year was based on the main principle that technical assistance is closely connected with other two Transport Division pillars: regulatory work and transport policy dialogue and analytical work.

14. Questions related to accession to UNECE legal instruments and, on the other hand, topics related to transport planning, new technologies, transport externalities, safety and security requires close and frequent contacts and advisory work with countries in transition. Alongside with careful planning and preparation of assistance, they are prerequisite for successful building of capacities. Therefore, possible threats like lack of funding, lack of continuity in policy development and personnel should be carefully studied and all necessary steps should be taken to avoid or minimize their influence.

15. Capacity building, technical assistance and exchange of best practice in Transport Division related activities are of utmost importance for countries with economies in transition. Therefore, developed member countries involved in various types of technical assistance are kindly requested to consider how their expertise and funding may contribute to these activities.
