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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE FOR TRADE, INDUSTRY AND
ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development

Team of Specialists on Industrial Restructuring
Fourth meeting, 11 February 2004

REPORT

Item 1 – Adoption of the Provisional Agenda

1. The provisional Agenda was adopted.

Item 2 – Progress reports on programme implementation

Project 1.2. Benchmarking policy and institutional framework for industrial restructuring in the UNECE region

2. The secretariat reported on the status of the project, which is dormant because of lack of resources. Mr. Chris Walker informed participants on the growing interest for benchmarking in the area of industrial restructuring, especially in countries of south-east Europe. The TOS took note of the information and requested the Chairman to explore this issue further, including the opportunities for funding the planned benchmarking report.

Project 3.2. Workshop on industrial restructuring in single industry towns and areas, and opportunities offered by sectoral and territorial clustering

Project 4.1. Workshop on managerial practices conducive to industrial restructuring

3. Under these agenda items, the secretariat reported on its attempts to find partners for the workshop on industrial restructuring in single industry towns and areas, which was tentatively planned to take place in Ukraine. The participants noted the lack of support for this project from the Ukrainian Government and agreed to organize the Workshop in another country.

4. A proposal was made to organize the workshop on industrial restructuring in single industry towns and areas as a joint event (Forum) with the workshop on managerial practices conducive to industrial restructuring. Ms. T. Skameykina and Mr. A. Koltsov supported the idea of such a Forum and agreed to liaise with their colleagues in the Kazakh Government to enlist support for this event. Mr. C. Walker agreed to explore possibilities of assisting with the organization of the Forum through the Operational Office of TMG in Kazakhstan. He also agreed to consult the Swiss Government, which could possibly provide financial support for this event. Mr. N. Rogovsky supported the idea of the Forum and agreed to consider possible contribution to its organization by the central and regional offices of the ILO. He suggested that the organizers invite to the Forum representatives of social partners both from developed and developing countries.

5. As a result of this discussion, the TOS agreed to organize a Forum on territorial aspects and managerial tools conducive to industrial restructuring covering the topics of both aforementioned workshops. It decided to hold this Forum tentatively on 3 and 4 November 2004 in Almaty, Kazakhstan, subject to an invitation from the Kazakh Government. It advised the secretariat to centre the programme of the Forum on problems encountered by single-industry towns and available solutions to these problems, including those solutions offered by modern managerial techniques and enhanced public-private cooperation. It also asked the secretariat to incorporate topics of interest to all parties contributing to its organization in the programme for this event.

Item 3 – Proposals for new activities

6. Under this agenda item, the meeting discussed a proposal to establish a Regional Centre for Industrial Restructuring for CIS countries under the auspices of UNECE. It was examined in the context of highlighting the current globalization trend in the world economy and the related changes in the settings for industrial restructuring. The Regional Centre could facilitate the accommodation of transition economies to the new conditions of international competition. As a first step toward organizing such a centre, the TOS could consider sponsoring a Regional Forum on industrial restructuring, which could be organized on a biennial basis.

7. The TOS expressed varying views on this issue and some of its members doubted that the private sector would be willing to sponsor such an undertaking. The Team agreed that the idea of the Regional Centre should be further explored and its potential beneficiaries identified. It decided to continue the discussion of this issue at its next meeting.

Item 4 – Mobilization of resources for the Team: in-kind contributions (research and experts), secretariat support and fund-raising

11. The TOS thanked “PACC Consulting I Audit” for providing its expertise for the preparation of the summary proceedings of the Regional Forum on Social Aspects and Financing of Industrial

Restructuring, held in Moscow in November 2003. It invited its members to actively contribute to the organization of the forthcoming Forum on territorial aspects of industrial restructuring to be held in Kazakhstan.

Item 5 - Cooperation with international organizations active in the area of industrial restructuring

12. The TOS thanked the secretariats of the International Labour Organization and the UNECE for their ongoing cooperation in the area of industrial restructuring and called on both organizations to sponsor jointly the organization of the November Forum in Kazakhstan. It asked the UNECE secretariat to liaise with the UNDP office in Astana to investigate the opportunities for collaboration in preparing the Forum. The TOS also encouraged the secretariat to develop further contacts with the international organizations dealing with industrial restructuring, in particular the EBRD and UNIDO.

Item 6 - Date of the next meeting

13. The TOS agreed to hold its fifth meeting in November 2004 in conjunction with the Regional Forum on Territorial Aspects of Industrial Restructuring.

Item 7 - Other business

14. There was no discussion under this agenda item.