



## Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Office of Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic  
and Environmental Activities

Geneva, 24 February 2009

UNECE Inland Transport Committee  
Seventy – first session, Geneva, 24-26 February, 2009

Item 7 – Assistance to countries with economies in transition  
(b) Other Activities, projects and fund-raising issues

Statement by Mr. Alexey Stukalo  
Deputy Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Distinguished participants,

On behalf of the **Secretariat of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe** I would like to express our gratitude to the UNECE and more in particular to **Ms. Eva Molnar**, Director of the Transport Division and her able team, for inviting us to participate in this important event. Co-operation between our organisations has been strong ever since the adoption of a Memorandum of Understanding in 2004.

In December 2006, the OSCE participating States adopted a **Ministerial Council Decision on the Future Transport Dialogue in the OSCE** (MC.DEC11/06).

This Decision provides us with a broad mandate for continued activities in the transport sector, inter alia:

- It emphasizes the OSCE's role in supporting the adoption and correct implementation of relevant international legal instruments, conventions, standards and norms.
- It stresses the need for enhanced co-operation and exchanges of best practices among OSCE participating States in the transport field.

- It tasks the OSCE Secretariat to continue promoting high level dialogue on transit transportation issues across the region and particularly between landlocked developing countries in Central Asia.
- Finally, it expresses strong support for ongoing UNECE initiatives such as the Euro-Asian Transport Links and the TEM and TER Master Plan.

Based on this mandate, the OSCE, jointly with the UNECE, has over the past year implemented various transport-related activities.

For example:

- In May 2008, at the concluding session of the 16<sup>th</sup> OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum in Prague, the UNECE contributed to the preparation of the review of implementation of OSCE commitments in the economic and environmental dimension and more in particular in the field of transport of dangerous goods. It was also here that the idea to develop a joint **OSCE-UNECE Handbook of best-practices at border-crossings** initially emerged. The project on this Handbook was officially launched in Geneva in last spring after which regional stakeholders meetings bringing together relevant border, customs and transport officials have been held in Minsk and in Bishkek. More information on this project, which is expected to be finalized by summer of this year, will be provided to you tomorrow under **item 12** of the agenda.

- As a direct follow-up to the 2008 Forum process an "International Expert Conference on the Safety of Navigation and Environmental Security in a Transboundary Context in the Black Sea Basin" was held in Odesa, Ukraine, in June of last year at the initiative of the Finnish OSCE Chairmanship and the Government of Ukraine. The relevant units with the UNECE Transport Division provided substantial support for which we are of course very grateful.

- Finally, in the framework of our support for railways development, we organised through our Field Presence in Ashgabad a training course for Turkmen railway officials on 'railway infrastructure development'. While the Austrian Federal Railways provided the training programme on the spot, both Czech and Hungarian railways agreed to host a study trip.

Let me now briefly turn to 2009 because also in the further course of this year we will continue implementing transport-related activities:

- Through the OSCE Centre in Astana, the Kazakh Customs Committee has requested the OSCE to organise together with the UNECE a **national capacity-building seminar** on improving the implementation of the "**International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods**". A training programme has been developed and the seminar will take place in mid-March. The OSCE has also been requested by the same customs administration to provide training on integrity issues in the customs sector, something we will definitely follow-up on in the course of April or May.

- Finally, as some of you may know, our Organization is also in the process of establishing a **Border Management Staff College** in Dushanbe, which, when it becomes operational, is expected to provide a comprehensive training programme to relevant staff representing customs, border and transport administrations from across our region. Trainings and capacity-building will cover both 'security' as well as facilitation aspects of border-crossings. In this important endeavour as well we hope to be able to count on UNECE's valuable support and expertise.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Distinguished participants,

Let me end by assuring you once again of the continued involvement of the OSCE in transport-related activities. In this regard we will continue to play the role of a facilitator, a political catalyst offering a platform for dialogue and co-operation. Whereas we have limited technical expertise, our Organization is well placed to raise awareness of problems and to foster trans-national co-operation between countries in our region.

In conclusion, the OSCE is interested in continuing its fruitful co-operation with the UNECE and more particularly in the area of transport security, in addressing the transit transportation problems of landlocked countries and in raising awareness and building capacity on existing international legal instruments.

Thank you for your attention.