



2019 SPECA ECONOMIC FORUM

CONNECTIVITY: SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT AND TRADE FACILITATION IN THE SPECA SUBREGION

20-21 NOVEMBER 2019 | ASHGABAT | TURKMENISTAN

(Hotel Yyldyz, Street Bagtyyarlyk 17)

Programme

Background: The United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) was established on 26 March 1998 by the Tashkent Declaration signed by the Presidents of the Central Asian countries and the Executive Secretaries of the UNECE and ESCAP as a United Nations special programme to support these countries in developing their cooperation and economic development and integration into the economies of Europe and Asia. The SPECA participating countries are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. UNECE and ESCAP jointly provide overall support to the activities within the framework of the Programme. In 2019, Turkmenistan is chairing the Programme and hosts the SPECA Days in Ashgabat from 18 to 21 November 2019. SPECA is currently providing a platform for collaboration for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that can be achieved better through such regional cooperation.

The concept of this Forum follows the recommendations of the 2018 SPECA Evaluation Report that SPECA, as a service-oriented, flexible and strategic platform for policy coordination and cooperation, should organize activities related to dialogue, consolidation of positions, solving of common problems, elaboration of strategies, and sharing expertise. The theme of the Forum reflects the demand of SPECA participating countries to contribute to connectivity through sustainable transport and trade facilitation in the region. The choice was based on consideration of regional issues, challenges and opportunities: namely how to lower barriers to trade and transport, using UN legal norms, standards and best practice recommendations, recognizing that economic growth should only be closely linked to sustainable development.

This Forum is conceived as a policy and operational meeting, with a less formal format, leading to more meaningful exchanges. It aims at enhancing discussions through panel sessions, oriented towards concrete tasks, such as finalizing a regional initiative / strategy, outlining actions to achieve it, formulating ideas for enhancing the transit regime, lowering trade barriers to foster cross-border supply chains, prepare recommendations on how to make the SPECA subregion a well-connected, sustainable transport and trade facilitation hub and devise follow-up mechanisms on how to ensure implementation of these policy recommendations for the implementation of relevant SDGs.

Discussions will focus on improving connectivity in the region: using sustainable transport and trade facilitation to connect people, enterprises, supply chains, regulatory agencies, IT systems, logistics, trade and transport infrastructure networks to facilitate the movement of people and goods, while ensuring sustainable growth.

20 NOVEMBER 2019

8:30 – 9:00	REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS
	Chairperson of the 2019 SPECA Economic Forum: H.E. Mr. Muhammedgeldi Serdarov , Deputy Minister of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan
9:00 – 10:45	OPENING OF THE FORUM Welcome statements: H.E. Mr. Batyr Bazarov , Minister of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan Mr. Kire Ilioski , Director, Office of the Executive Secretary, UNECE Mr. Hirohito Toda , Principal Officer, Office of the Executive Secretary, ESCAP Ms Natia Natsvlishvili , UNDP Resident Representative a.i., UNDP Turkmenistan Statements by Heads of Delegations of the SPECA countries: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan H.E. Mr. Ajmal AHMADI , Minister of Industry and Commerce of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan H.E. Mr. Sahib Mammadov , Deputy Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan H.E. Mr. Yerkebulan Sapiyev , Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kazakhstan in Turkmenistan H.E. Mr. Aidin Sharsheev , State Secretary, Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic H.E. Mr. Zavqi Zavqizoda , First Vice Minister on Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan H.E. Mr. Badriddin Abidov , Deputy Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan Mr. Sergei Ivanov , Vice-Chairman of the CIS Executive Committee Structure and objectives of the 2019 SPECA Economic Forum Mr. Mario Apostolov , Forum Coordinator, UNECE <u>EU's strategy for Central Asia and possible synergies</u> H.E. Mr. Peter Burian , EU Special Representative for Central Asia
10:45 – 11:00	COFFEE BREAK
11:00 – 11:20	<u>How to propel inclusive and sustainable growth in the SPECA region</u> <i>(background paper)</i> Mr. Rumen Dobrinsky , International expert
11:20 – 13:00	SESSION I: TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY IN THE SPECA SUBREGION Moderated by Mr. Yuwei Li , Director, Sustainable Transport Division, UNECE

International framework for sustainable transport development

Mr. Tahir Nepesov, Deputy Chairman, “Turkmenavtoulaglary” Agency under the Ministry of Industry and Communications of Turkmenistan

UNECE activities for better transport connectivity

Mr. Yuwei Li, Director, Sustainable Transport Division, UNECE

ESCAP activities for better transport connectivity

Mr. Weimin Ren, Director, Transport Division, ESCAP

ECO activities on Transport and Connectivity

Mr. Sayed Yahya Akhlaqi, Deputy Secretary General, ECO

Development of efficient transport corridors: Operationalization of the Euro-Asian Transport Links

Mr. Georgios Georgiadis, Economic Affairs Officer, Sustainable Transport Division, UNECE

SPECA and seamless, smart and environmentally sound transport connectivity in Asia

Mr. Edouard Chong, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP

CAREC – from transport corridors to economic corridors

Mr. Chang Ching Yu, Country Director in Turkmenistan, Asian Development Bank

EBRD activities for better transport connectivity

Mr. Fatih Turkmenoglu, Associate Director, Head of Turkmenistan office, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development

13:00 – 14:00

LUNCH BREAK

14:00 – 15:00

Moderated by **Mr. Weimin Ren**, Director, Transport Division, ESCAP

Fast, safe and environment friendly transport operations/services

Mr. Viacheslav Vikentyev, Regional manager CIS, Customs affairs, IRU

United Nations transport-related legal instruments – an efficient tool to improve transport corridors in the SPECA region

Mr. Berik Bulekbayev, General Director, NII TK, UNECE consultant

Intermodal transport and development of connectivity in Turkmenbashi port

Mr. Annadurdy Kosyaev, Deputy Chairman, “Turkmendenizderyayollary” Agency under the Ministry of Industry and Communications of Turkmenistan

Report on the Review of Transport and Logistics Systems in three SPECA countries

Prof. Anatoly Molokovich, UNECE consultant

Discussion (15 min)

15:15 – 15:30

COFFEE BREAK

15:30 – 17:45

SESSION II: TRADE FACILITATION IN THE SPECA SUBREGION

Moderator: H.E. Mr. Muhammedgeldi Serdarov, Deputy Minister of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan

Towards a trade facilitation strategy for SPECA

H.E. Mr. Zavqi Zavqizoda, First Deputy Minister of Economic Development and Trade of the Republic of Tajikistan

The advantages of belonging to the universal rules-based trading system under the WTO and the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

Ms. Sheri Rosenow Counsellor, Market Access Section, WTO

Trade facilitation and development of supply chains in the SPECA region

Ms. Larissa Kislyakova, UNECE Consultant

Non-tariff measures, digital trade, sustainable development and trade facilitation

Mr. Yann Duval, Chief, Trade Policy and Facilitation Section, Trade, Investment and Innovation Division, ESCAP

Instruments for streamlined information exchange: Single Window, electronic multimodal data exchange

Mr. Mario Apostolov, UNECE Deputy Coordinator of SPECA, Regional Adviser, UNECE Economic Cooperation and Trade Division

Launch of the new UNECE Publication “Trade Facilitation Terms: an English-Russian-Chinese Glossary (revised third edition)”

Mr. Mario Apostolov, UNECE Deputy Coordinator of SPECA, Regional Adviser, and **Mr. Grant Akopyan**, Consultant, UNECE Economic Cooperation and Trade Division

The implementation of ASYCUDA in several countries of the region: a tool for trade facilitation and connectivity

Mr. Dmitry Godunov, Regional Coordinator for Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Afghanistan, ASYCUDA Customs Modernization Programme, UNCTAD

Private sector views and contributions to a strategic approach to trade facilitation in the region, ITC projects

Mr. Pierre Bonthonneau, Trade Facilitation Adviser, ITC

Discussion (15 min)

9:00 – 10:45

SESSION III: HIGH-LEVEL POLICY SEGMENT ON DEVELOPING CONNECTIVITY AND THE REGION AS A TRADE AND TRANSPORT FACILITATION HUB

Moderator: William Tompson, Senior Economist, OECD

Enhancing Connectivity and Freight in Central Asia

Mr. William Tompson, Senior Economist, OECD

Statements by Heads of Delegation of the SPECA countries on activities to speed up border crossing, increase trade and transport, and plans and visions to boost cooperation for better connectivity:

H.E. Mr. Ajmal AHMADI, Minister of Industry and Commerce of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

H.E. Mr. Sahib Mammadov, Deputy Minister of Economy of Azerbaijan

H.E. Mr. Yerkebulan Sapiyev, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kazakhstan in Turkmenistan

H.E. Mr. Aidin Sharsheev, State Secretary, Ministry of Economy of the Kyrgyz Republic

H.E. Mr. Zavqi Zavqizoda, First Vice Minister on Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan

H.E. Mr. Karar Mammedov, Deputy Minister of Trade and Foreign Economic Relations of Turkmenistan

H.E. Mr. Badriddin Abidov, Deputy Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade of Uzbekistan

10:45 – 11:00

COFFEE BREAK

11:00 – 12:15

SESSION IV: COOPERATION PARTNERSHIPS TO ACHIEVE CONNECTIVITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (panel discussion)

Moderator: H.E. Mr. Muhammedgeldi Serdarov, Deputy Minister of Finance and Economy of Turkmenistan

Statements by development partners on their activities for better transport and trade connectivity, and views on the initiative for reducing barriers to trade and transport in the SPECA region:

Ms. Natalia Gherman, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Central Asia, the Head of UNRCCA

Ms. Natia Natsvlishvili, Resident Representative a.i., UNDP Turkmenistan

H.E. Ambassador Natalia Drozd, Head, OSCE Centre in Ashgabat

Mr. Sergei Ivanov, Vice-Chairman of the CIS Executive Committee

Mr. Sergei Ivanov, Senior Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the UN Office and other International Organizations in Geneva

Ms. Christina Schmahl, Regional Trade Policy Advisor, GIZ

	<p>Mr. Pierre Bonthonneau, Trade Facilitation Adviser, ITC</p> <p><u>Discussion on the establishment of a SPECA Trust Fund (15 min)</u></p> <p>Mr. Kire Ilioski, Director, Office of the Executive Secretary, UNECE</p>
<p>12:15 – 13:00</p>	<p>CLOSING OF THE FORUM. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 2019 SPECA ECONOMIC FORUM</p> <p>Discussion on a Concluding Document and Recommendations of the 2019 SPECA Economic Forum – work towards an initiative to foster</p> <p>Closing statements by representatives of Turkmenistan, UNECE and ESCAP</p>

Further Information:

www.unece.org, <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=52512>

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