



DECISIONS
of the First Session of the SPECA Governing Council
(Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, 27 June 2006)

Decision I (SPECA/GC/Jun/2006/1)
Agenda item 1

The Council noted with interest the countries statements made by Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan. The Council welcomed Islamic Republic of Afghanistan as a new member of SPECA and expressed the confidence that the inclusion of Afghanistan would further strengthen the process of cooperation among the SPECA countries.

Decision II (SPECA/GC/Jun/2006/2)
Agenda item 2

The Council reviewed the report of the first session of the SPECA Coordinating Committee and appreciating its successful outcome, endorsed its decisions.

Decision III (SPECA/GC/Jun/2006/3)
Agenda item 3

The Council noted the progress made in the implementation of the Work Plan 2005-2007. It expressed appreciation over the work achieved by the PWG on Transport and Border Crossing and the PWG on Water and Energy Resources. It also noted with appreciation that the PWGs on ICT for Development and Statistics had held their first meetings and adopted their respective Work Plans. The Council emphasized the need to activate the PWG on Trade by selecting its chairman and hold its first meeting. Further it appreciated the efforts made by UNESCAP and UNECE to mobilize financial resources to implement the Work Plan 2005-2007 and urged them to continue these efforts in future.

The Council reviewed the status of the appointment of co-chairs of the PWGs. It was decided to have one Chair for each working group with the flexibility that by mutual consent, a Project Working Group could have two co-chairs. The Council decided that the PWGs will be chaired as follows:

1. PWG on Transport and Border Crossing – Kazakhstan
2. PWG on Water and Energy Resources - Kyrgyzstan
3. PWG on ICT for Development – Azerbaijan
4. PWG on Statistics – Tajikistan
5. PWG on Trade – Tajikistan
6. PWG on Gender and Economy – Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan

The Council noted that the two United Nations Regional Commissions had already addressed a letter to the Government of Uzbekistan, inviting them to co-chair the PWG on Trade and the outcome of this proposal will be brought to its attention in due course.

The Council noted possible additional activities and projects relating to SMEs and enterprise development in the context of raising competitiveness and innovative development and that specific proposals will be submitted for consideration at the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee.

Decision IV (SPECA/GC/Jun/2006/4)

Agenda item 4

The Council appreciated the preparatory work done for the establishment of the PWG on Gender and Economy and endorsed its establishment.

Decision V (SPECA/GC/Jun/2006/5)

Agenda item 5

The Council reviewed the proceedings and outcome of the Economic Forum. It expressed satisfaction over the interactive nature of the discussions among different stakeholders. It however hoped that the next session of the Forum would attract higher level of participation from Governments and greater representation of the business sector. It expressed its appreciation to the Secretary General of UNCTAD for having delivered the keynote address. The Council reflected on the major conclusions and recommendations from the Forum and decided as follows:

1. Session 1

The Council agreed with the general thrust of the observations and conclusions.

2. Session 2

a) The Council decided that the proposal for a coordinated energy system be developed and submitted to the PWG on Water and Energy Resources for its consideration and report to the next meeting of the Coordinating Committee.

b) The Council decided that the project proposal on Baku Initiative on Energy Efficiency indicating the tangible activities and outcomes be submitted to the PWG on Water and Energy Resources for consideration.

3. Session 3

The Council decided that the proposals relating to trade and transport facilitation mechanisms as well as to enhance the effectiveness of existing regional and bilateral trade and transport agreements and promote countries accession to WTO, be developed and submitted to the PWG on Trade in coordination with the work already done under the PWG on Transport and Border Crossing.

The Council emphasized that in developing the project proposals, attention should be given to related work of other organizations such as CAREC and EurAsEC in order to promote cooperation with them and avoid unnecessary duplication.

Decision VI (SPECA/GC/Jun/2006/6)

Agenda item 6

The Council appreciated the participation of OSCE, World Bank, IMF, UNDESA and EurAsEC in the panel discussion on establishing strategic partnerships.

In the panel discussions areas/projects having potential for establishing strategic partnerships as identified by the panellists were noted as follows:

OSCE

- Implementation of Agreement on Border Control
- Euroasian transport linkages
- Measuring progress in transit transport development
- Environmental sustainability
- Research in the area of transit and transport potential of the SPECA region (SNERI)

EurAsEC

- Hydro energy
- Transport and trade
- Facilitation of labour migration and trans-boundary migration issues

World Bank

- Trade and transport facilitation

- Infrastructure development including transit routes
- Impact of infrastructure on the environment
- Public private partnerships

IMF

- Improving trade and transport infrastructure including regulatory frameworks
- Institutional arrangements to address trade and transport facilitation comprehensively.

The Council noted that there was considerable potential for developing synergies between SPECA and CAREC. To explore possible strategic partnership opportunities a strategy paper on SPECA-CAREC cooperation should be submitted to the next session of the Coordinating Committee.

Decision VII (SPECA/GC/Jun/2006/7)

Agenda item 7

The Council welcomed the offer of the Government of Tajikistan to host the second session of the Governing Council with the Economic Forum and hence the second session of the Coordinating Committee. It was agreed that the theme, venue and dates in 2007 will be finalized in consultation with the National Coordinator of Tajikistan, as the incoming Chairman of the Governing Council and submitted for approval at the second meeting of the Coordinating Committee.

The Council welcomed the establishment of the SPECA Network of Economic Research Institutes (SNERI) and recognized that this initiative could strengthen analytical work within the SPECA framework.

Decision VIII (SPECA/GC/Jun/2006/8)

Agenda item 8

The Council adopted its report containing the major decisions taken at its first session.

The Council expressed its appreciation to the Government of Azerbaijan for its outstanding hospitality and for the excellent arrangements made for the meetings of the Governing Council and the Economic Forum. It also expressed its appreciation to the Executive Secretaries of UNESCAP and UNECE for their strong commitment to support the SPECA member countries in their economic and social development as well as for the excellent preparations for these meetings.