



UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA (SPECA)

Fourth Session of the SPECA Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development

(Baku, Azerbaijan, 25 November 2011)

REPORT

The fourth session of the SPECA Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development (PWG on KBD), jointly organized by UNECE and ESCAP and hosted by the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, was held in Baku on 25 November 2011. In conjunction with the session, an International Conference on Knowledge-based Development and Innovative Entrepreneurship was also organized by UNECE in cooperation with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technologies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Baku on 24 and 25 November 2011.

Representatives of Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan as well as observers from China, Mongolia, Pakistan and the Russian Federation participated in the session along with representatives of UNECE and ESCAP. The List of participants of the fourth session of the SPECA PWG on KBD is attached (Annex I).

Opening session

Mr. Elmir Velizadeh, Deputy Minister of Communications and Information Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, welcomed the participants of the session. He highlighted the usefulness of the PWG on KBD, which provides a useful platform for discussions and broad exchange of experiences among SPECA policymakers working in the area of knowledge-based development.

Mr. Rumen Dobrinsky, Director of the UNECE Economic Cooperation and Integration Division, expressed his appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting this important event. He stressed the fact that the UNECE Economic Cooperation and Integration Division is committed to support the PWG by providing secretariat support and contributing to capacity-building activities for the benefit of SPECA member countries in areas covered by this PWG. He mentioned that the work of the SPECA PWG on KBD provides a good example of joint works between two United Nations Regional Commissions, complementing

each other using their comparative advantages. He also extended his gratitude to the Government of the Russian Federation for its financial support, which made it possible to implement many of the activities of the PWG.

On behalf of ESCAP, Mr. Nikolay Pomoshchnikov, Head of the ESCAP Subregional Office for North and Central Asia (SONCA), welcomed the participants to the fourth session of the SPECA Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development and expressed his appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting the session and UNECE for taking the lead in organizing the event. He emphasized that ESCAP is firmly committed to assist the SPECA member countries to strengthening their capacity in ICT applications for development and disaster risk reduction. To further their efforts, ESCAP has recently established its Subregional Office SONCA in Almaty, Kazakhstan which will also serve as the joint ESCAP-UNECE Office in Central Asia. Finally, he hoped that recognizing the role of ICT as an integral part of disaster risk reduction and management, the SPECA member countries would approve the broadened terms of reference to include “knowledge-based disaster risk reduction and management” as one of the work areas for SPECA member countries.

Election of officers and adoption of the agenda

Mr. Rumen Dobrinsky recalled that Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan were elected as Co-Chairs of the Group at the inauguration session of the PWG on KBD. He then suggested that Mr. Elmir Velizadeh, Deputy Minister of Communications and Information Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan, would chair the fourth session of the PWG on KBD.

The PWG elected Mr. Elmir Velizadeh as Chairperson of the fourth session of the PWG on KBD.

Following this, Mr. Elmir Velizadeh, as the Chairperson of the fourth session, introduced the provisional agenda, which had been circulated to the participants well in advance of the session. The Project Working Group adopted the agenda of the fourth session of the PWG on KBD.

Approval of the broadened Terms of Reference of the Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development

The Chairperson recalled that the third session of the SPECA PWG on KBD, held in Astana on 30 September 2010, recommended to include knowledge-based disaster management issues into its work programme, recognizing the role of ICT as an integral part of disaster risk reduction and management.

Mr. Ram Tiwaree, ESCAP Secretary to the PWG on KBD and Economic Affairs Officer of the ESCAP Information and Communications Technology and Disaster Risk Reduction Division, introduced a draft modification to the existing Terms of Reference of the SPECA PWG on KBD.

The Project Working Group adopted the broadened Terms of Reference with the proposed amendment (Annex II). The broadened Terms of Reference of the PWG on KBD will be presented to the seventh session of the SPECA Governing Council for its consideration and approval.

Review of programme implementation in 2011

Ms. Michiko Enomoto, UNECE Secretary to the PWG on KBD and Economic Affairs Officer of the UNECE Economic Cooperation and Integration Division, and Mr. Ram Tiwaree reported on activities carried out within the framework of the Programme of Work for 2011 of the PWG on KBD (Annex III).

The PWG on KBD acknowledged with satisfaction the usefulness of the work accomplished during the reported period.

Delegates agreed that the PWG on KBD is a useful platform for exchange of experiences and best practices, as well as capacity-building in such areas as ICT for development, economic competitiveness and innovative development, attracting financial resources in support of innovative sectors of economy, commercialization and protection of intellectual property rights, public-private partnerships and knowledge-based disaster risk reduction and management, and supported further work in these areas.

Adoption of the Programme of Work for 2012-2013 of the SPECA PWG on KBD

Mr. Rumen Dobrinsky and Mr. Ram Tiwaree made proposals on the possible structuring of the Programme of Work for 2012-2013 of the PWG on KBD and on activities to be included in the programme of work.

Delegates considered that the proposed programme of work is highly relevant to the needs of their countries, and supported the activities listed in the Programme of Work for 2012-2013.

Mr. Fikret Pashayev, Senior Adviser of the Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway (TASIM) Project Secretariat, made a presentation on this project. He highlighted the importance of TASIM for the knowledge-based development of the SPECA member countries, and requested the PWG to publicize and support this initiative.

The PWG adopted the Programme of Work for 2012-2013 of the SPECA PWG on KBD as the basis for its work in the next biennium (Annex IV). The PWG agreed that the details of the envisaged activities in the programme of work could be further elaborated in consultation with the host countries on the future activities.

The Chairperson invited delegates to contact the UNECE and ESCAP secretariats within 30 days if they had any further comments on the Programme of Work for 2012-2013.

Date and venue of the next session of the SPECA PWG on KBD

The representative of Kyrgyzstan announced that her country could be interested to host the fifth session of the PWG on KBD in 2012, subject to further consultations. This would need to be confirmed formally by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in due course. The announcement was met with interest by all delegates.

Other business

Draft decisions, conclusions and recommendations were distributed among the delegations of the SPECA member countries. The delegates adopted the decisions as presented to the session and amended by delegates. The Decisions of the fourth session of the SPECA Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development are attached to this report (Annex V).

Closing session

The Chairperson expressed satisfaction with the results of the fourth session of the SPECA PWG on KBD. He reiterated the usefulness of the SPECA PWG on KBD as a platform to share international experiences and knowledge, and to discuss ICT and knowledge-based development issues in the region. He emphasized the importance of the activities of the PWG on KBD for SPECA member countries in achieving economic prosperity of the region.

Mr. Rumen Dobrinsky highlighted the regional cooperation aspect of the SPECA and encouraged the member countries to use the SPECA platform to further strengthen its relations with neighbouring countries.

Mr. Dobrinsky and Mr. Pomoshchnikov expressed gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting this important event and the hospitality extended to its participants. They also expressed sincere appreciation to all delegates from SPECA member countries for their active participation and cooperation which made this event successful.

FOURTH SESSION OF THE SPECA PWG ON KBD

(Baku, Azerbaijan, 25 November 2011)

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**TERMS OF REFERENCE
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KNOWLEDGE-BASED DEVELOPMENT**

A. PREAMBLE

1. The Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development (PWG on KBD) is a subsidiary body within the governing structure of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). The member countries of the Programme are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) provide overall support to the Programme.

2. The PWG on KBD draws on previous forms of regional cooperation in related areas, in particular, on the work of the SPECA Project Working Group on Information and Communication Technologies for Development (PWG on ICT).

B. OBJECTIVES

3. In line with the overall objectives of SPECA to support its member countries in developing subregional cooperation, and integrating their economies into the world economy, the PWG on KBD shall: (i) promote and support policies on knowledge-based development in the member countries; (ii) facilitate cooperation in the initiatives related to knowledge-based development between the member countries and other regional initiatives; (iii) support and coordinate capacity-building and institutional strengthening activities and programmes related to knowledge-based development in the member countries; (iv) serve as a forum for discussion on issues related to knowledge-based development, including information and communication technologies (ICT) related policy and regulatory issues.

4. The thematic orientation of the activities of the PWG on KBD will include, but not be limited to, areas such as: (i) ICT for development; (ii) promoting innovation and innovative development; (iii) supporting knowledge-based competitiveness; (iv) financing ICT infrastructure and innovative development; (v) commercialization and protection of intellectual property; (vi) public-private partnerships; and (vii) knowledge-based disaster risk reduction and management.

C. PARTICIPANTS

5. The PWG on KBD shall comprise National Representatives, nominated by the Governments of SPECA member countries. The National Representatives shall be senior officials involved in the formulation and implementation or be aware of national policies and programmes, which affect national policies related to knowledge-based development in their respective countries and able to effectively follow up the recommendations and decisions of the PWG on KBD.

6. Each participating country shall also nominate, on a permanent or on an ad hoc basis, experts on various aspects of knowledge-based development as required.

7. Neighbouring countries of the SPECA region are invited to nominate their representatives to participate in the work of the PWG on KBD, especially when issues concerning cooperation with neighbouring regions are discussed.

8. Relevant subregional organizations implementing programmes related to knowledge-based development are invited to nominate their representatives to participate in the work of the PWG on KBD.

9. United Nations organizations bodies as well as other bilateral and multilateral agencies and organizations operating in the knowledge-based development issues in the SPECA member countries are invited to participate in the work of the PWG on KBD and to nominate liaison officers on matters related to its work.

D. MODALITIES OF OPERATION

10. The PWG on KBD shall elect two Co-Chairpersons from among the National Representatives nominated by the Governments.

11. The secretariats of UNECE and ESCAP will provide substantive support to the PWG on KBD activities. The secretariats will facilitate the preparation and organization of the sessions of the Group and will maintain records of its activities.

12. The PWG on KBD shall hold annual sessions at a date and venue agreed by the participating countries.

E. FUNDING

13. The operational costs of the PWG on KBD as well as the costs of participation of national representatives and experts in its sessions shall as a rule be borne by the Governments of participating countries. In addition, the UNECE and ESCAP will support, within their available resources, the functioning of the PWG on KBD.

14. The PWG on KBD shall also seek funds and technical assistance for its operations from multilateral and bilateral donors.

F. PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ACTIVITIES

15. The PWG on KBD shall develop, agree upon and implement an annual work programme.

16. The PWG on KBD shall formulate and agree upon specific projects and programmes and seek extrabudgetary resources for their implementation.

17. Important policy conclusions should be brought to the attention of high-level policymaking authorities in the SPECA member countries.

18. Recommendations along with agreed investment and project ideas should be presented to relevant international organizations and international programmes as well as to private investors.

G. OTHER MATTERS

19. The current Terms of Reference will be reviewed in 3 years or sooner if the SPECA member countries so decide.

ANNEX III

REVIEW OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION BY THE SPECA PWG ON KBD IN 2011

This report contains activities carried out/to be carried out by the UNECE and ESCAP secretariats within the framework of the SPECA Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development (PWG on KBD) or addressing topics within its thematic areas in 2011. These activities are in line with the Programme of Work for 2010-2011 of the PWG, which was adopted at the second session in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan on 12 November 2009 and the revised Programme of Work for 2011, adopted at the third session in Astana, Kazakhstan on 30 September 2010.

The UNECE and ESCAP secretariats, within the framework of implementation of the Programme of Work of the SPECA PWG on KBD, organized/will organize the following capacity-building events in 2011:

- UNECE Workshop on best practices in the sphere of Public-Private Partnerships (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 26 January 2011).
- UNECE High-Level Policy Seminar on Developing Innovative Entrepreneurship (Haifa, Israel, 28 March - 2 April 2011).
- UNECE Capacity-building meeting on the UNECE Public-Private Partnerships Initiative (Geneva, Switzerland, 18-19 April 2011).
- UNECE Applied Policy Seminar on Policies for Innovation in the 21st Century: Broadening the Horizons of Collaboration and Risk Sharing (Geneva, Switzerland, 12-13 May 2011).
- UNECE Training Workshop on Public-Private Partnerships within the fourth Annual CEE and SEE Summit (Prague, Czech Republic, 8 June 2011).
- UNECE International Conference on Promoting Eco-innovation: Policies and Opportunities (Tel Aviv, Israel, 11 -13 July 2011).
- UNECE International Conference on Raising Awareness of the Role of Intellectual Property Rights in Innovation and the Dangers and Economic Costs of Intellectual Property Rights Infringements - Good Practices and Policy Recommendations (Geneva, Switzerland, 7-8 July 2011).

- UNECE Subregional Conference on Commercialization and Evaluation of Intellectual Property and on Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, 11-12 October 2011).
- UNECE International Conference on Knowledge-based Development and Innovative Entrepreneurship (Baku, Azerbaijan, 24 -25 November 2011).
- Third meeting of the UNECE Expert Group on Public-Private Partnerships for CIS countries (Baku, Azerbaijan, 25 November 2011).
- UNECE Special Meeting on the Innovation Performance Review of Kazakhstan (Geneva, Switzerland, 30 November 2011).
- UNECE Special Meeting on the UNECE Public-Private Partnerships Initiative (Geneva, Switzerland, 1 December 2011).
- ESCAP/APCICT Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Subregional Training of Trainers Workshop on APCICT's "Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders" (Academy) Modules 9 (ICT and Disaster Risk Management) and Module 10 (ICT and Climate Change) (Issyk-kul Lake, Kyrgyzstan, 7-9 September 2011).
- ESCAP/APCICT Launch of the Tajik version of Academy Curriculum & National Workshop in Tajikistan on Academy Module 3 (e-Government Applications), Module 7 (ICT Project Management in Theory and Practice) and Module 8 (Options for Funding ICT for Development) (Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 13-18 September 2011).
- ESCAP Regional workshop on cooperation and information sharing for flood risk reduction and extreme weather events in Central Asia (Baku, Azerbaijan, 23 -25 November 2011).

Representatives of the SPECA member countries also participated/will participate in the following events:

- Regional Training of Trainers on Academy Modules 9 and 10 (Seongnam City, Republic of Korea, 22-26 February 2011).
- Second Regional Forum on ICT Capacity-building (Incheon and Cheonan, Republic of Korea, 24-28 October 2011): The Forum will provide an opportunity to review the progress achieved by APCICT, deliberate upon the lessons learned, and accordingly formulate the roadmap for its future work so that APCICT can deliver more impactful services to ESCAP Member States. The Forum will also help facilitate multilateral cooperation, providing a suitable occasion for ICT and development stakeholders to share their experiences and best practices, assess current

needs, and identify areas for mutual collaboration. The Regional Forum will be a large-scale event with over 100 participants from around 30 countries, including Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

- ESCAP Expert Group Meeting on Regional Knowledge and Cooperation for Comprehensive Multi-Hazard Risk Management in Asia and the Pacific (Bangkok, Thailand, 27-29 June 2011).
- Second session of the ESCAP Committee on Disaster Risk Reduction (Bangkok, Thailand, 29 June - 1 July 2011).
- Consultative Meeting on Regional Cooperative Mechanisms on Space Applications for an Effective Disaster Management and Sustainable Development (Colombo, Sri Lanka, 25-27 October 2011).
- Sixth session of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration (Geneva, Switzerland, 30 November - 2 December 2011).

PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE SPECA PWG ON KBD FOR 2012-2013

The activities to be carried out by the Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development (PWG on KBD) are demand-driven, focused on a limited number of priority topics and matched with available resources.

ACTIVITIES ENVISAGED FOR 2012-2013

1. Capacity-building in policy options and practical instruments for promoting knowledge-based development

Objectives:

To strengthen the national capacity of the SPECA countries to advance knowledge-based development by developing relevant substantive skills, increasing the organizational capacity of the institutions involved and promoting regional cooperation.

Rationale:

The project is in line with the objectives of the PWG on KBD as specified in its Terms of Reference. Implementation will be financed from the UNECE extrabudgetary funds.

Proposed activities:

- (i) Organization of a regional/subregional capacity-building event on knowledge-based development, possibly in conjunction with annual session of the PWG on KBD (tentatively envisaged for 2013);
- (ii) Participation of experts from SPECA member countries in UNECE policy-oriented meetings and capacity-building events on promoting knowledge-based development for policymakers and practitioners; and
- (iii) Policy advisory services and other events promoting knowledge-based development at the request of Governments of SPECA member countries, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary funding.

2. Capacity-building on the adoption and application of innovative clean technologies for climate change adaptation and sustainable knowledge-driven growth

Objectives:

To strengthen the national capacity of the SPECA member countries to adopt and apply innovative clean technologies for climate change adaptation and sustainable knowledge-driven growth.

The project aims to strengthen national policymakers' capacity to design effective innovation policy for clean technology take-up and diffusion; to understand the different financial mechanisms to facilitate the financing of specific clean technology projects, including through Public-Private Partnerships; and to mainstream climate change considerations into the policy mix to create an appropriate enabling environment.

Rationale:

The project is in line with the objectives of the PWG on KBD as specified in its Terms of Reference. Implementation will be financed from the United Nations Development Account fund.

Proposed activities:

- (i) Preparation of country assessments of participating countries' clean technology needs, climate action and innovation policies, and financing options for take-up and diffusion of clean technologies (tentatively envisaged for 2012);
- (ii) Organization of a regional/subregional project initiation meeting for policymakers of SPECA member countries (tentatively envisaged for 2013); and
- (iii) Organization of national capacity-building seminars on the adoption and application of clean technologies for climate change adaptation and sustainable knowledge-driven growth, covering issues related to innovation policy, climate change policy; and financing (tentatively envisaged for 2013).

3. Capacity-building on ICT policy for promoting innovation-based competitiveness

Objectives:

To empower senior decision makers with relevant ICT policy knowledge and expertise in promoting innovation-based competitiveness and eCommerce development.

Rationale:

The project is in line with the objectives of the PWG on KBD as specified in its Terms of Reference. Implementation will be financed from the UNECE extrabudgetary funds.

Proposed activities:

Organization of a national/regional capacity-building event on ICT policy and regulatory framework for promoting innovation-based competitiveness and facilitating eCommerce (upon request).

4. Strengthening regional knowledge and capacity of ESCAP Member States in policies and strategies in disaster risk reduction for inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development

Objectives:

To build a regional knowledge base for improved disaster risk reduction and increase awareness of policymakers of emerging disaster risks and related socio-economic implications to address gaps and priorities in future disaster risk reduction strategies

Rationale:

The effectiveness of disaster risk management depends greatly on countries knowledge and improved availability of information and analytical capabilities in assessing the benefits of disaster risk reduction and the effects of disasters. With a focus on building a regional knowledge base for improved disaster risk reduction, the project will develop and make available information and knowledge to strengthen the capacity of policymakers and government officials to formulate strategies and policies to reduce the risk of disasters. Implementation will be financed from the ESCAP extrabudgetary funds when available.

Proposed activities:

- (i) Develop the Asia-Pacific Disaster Report 2012 on emerging disaster risks and socio-economic implications as well as best practices and lessons learned in various aspects of disaster risk reduction and management in the Asia-Pacific region.
- (ii) Develop the Asia-Pacific Gateway on Disaster Risk Reduction and Development as a knowledge management platform for disaster risk reduction in the Asia-Pacific region to promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction into development planning.

5. Strengthening regional cooperation mechanisms in ICTs and disaster risk reduction for development

Objectives:

To strengthen regional cooperation for capacity development in support of effective disaster risk reduction and development, with emphasis on extreme weather-related events such as drought and floods.

Rationale:

Though there are advancements in Information, Communication and Space Technologies (ICSTs) and their applications, there exists significant digital divides. Effective access and use of satellite-based resources can enhance response efforts by providing valuable information and services including remote sensing, communication and navigational information. Strengthened regional cooperation can enhance sharing and access to information and capacities to use them for disaster risk reduction and management.

Proposed activities:

Prepare relevant documents and organize capacity development training, seminars and/or workshops to access and utilize the space-based products, information and services available through strengthened regional cooperation and networking for disaster risk management and development.

6. Enhancing National Capacities to Use ICTs for Socio-Economic Development

Objectives:

To enhance the capacities of policymakers, government officials and other relevant stakeholders to utilize ICTs for achieving national development goals

Rationale:

The initiative is in line with the objectives of the SPECA PWG on KBD as specified in its Terms of Reference. The activities will be funded through the extrabudgetary resources of APCICT and co-funding mobilized through national and subregional partners.

Proposed activities:

- (i) Russian version of two new training Modules developed by APCICT as part of its flagship ICT for development (ICTD) capacity-building programme called the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders (Academy) will be launched in 2012. These include Module 9

(ICT for Disaster Risk Reduction) and Module 10 (ICT and Climate Change).

- (ii) A subregional Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop on Academy Module 9 and Module 10 will be organized in the Russian language for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries. The workshop will be organized in partnership with the ESCAP Subregional office for North and Central Asia (SONCA), and is tentatively scheduled in Kazakhstan in May 2012. It will help expand the pool of local resource persons and will be followed by a series of national level workshops in countries such as Azerbaijan.
- (iii) Provincial level ICTD training of officials will be conducted in Tajikistan in 2012 utilizing the Tajik language version of the Academy Modules 1-8 already launched in 2011.
- (iv) APCICT will launch two sets of ICTD case studies from the CIS countries. These case studies will be used to customize and complement the Academy training modules so that the trainees can better appreciate the learning in their own contexts.
- (v) APCICT will provide advisory services to the ICT Council in Tajikistan for building and strengthening national institutions in the area of ICT.
- (vi) APCICT will also conduct another subregional TOT for academicians and resource persons from the CIS countries aimed at raising the awareness of students and youth, who comprise the workforce of the future, about the potential of ICTs to promote socio-economic development. This will be part of an APCICT initiative titled "Turning Today's Youth into Tomorrow's Leaders". The TOT will utilize the Russian language version of a new learning resource developed by APCICT especially for universities and educational institutions. Ministries of Education and ICT as well as universities from the CIS countries will be engaged in development of national strategies for utilization of the learning resource.

SUMMARY TABLE

Area of Activity	Lead Executive Agency	Timeframe
Capacity-building in policy options and practical instruments for promoting knowledge-based development	UNECE	2012-2013
Capacity-building on the adoption and application of innovative clean technologies for climate change adaptation and sustainable knowledge-driven growth	UNECE	2012-2013
Capacity-building on ICT policy for promoting innovation-based competitiveness	UNECE	2012-2013
Strengthening regional knowledge and capacity of ESCAP Member States in policies and strategies in disaster risk reduction for inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development	ESCAP	2012-2013
Strengthening regional cooperation mechanisms in ICTs and disaster risk reduction for development	ESCAP	2012-2013
Enhancing national capacities to use ICTs for socio-economic development	ESCAP/APCICT	2012-2013

DECISIONS OF THE FOURTH SESSION OF THE SPECA PWG ON KBD

1. The PWG approved the broadened Terms of Reference of the Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development. The broadened Terms of Reference of the PWG on KBD will be presented to the seventh session of the SPECA Governing Council for its consideration and approval.
2. The PWG took note of the report on the activities carried out within the framework of the Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development in 2011. It acknowledged with satisfaction the usefulness of the work accomplished during the reported period.
3. Delegates agreed that the PWG on KBD is a useful platform for exchange of experiences and best practices, as well as capacity-building in such areas as ICT for development, economic competitiveness and innovative development, attracting financial resources in support of innovative sectors of economy, commercialization and protection of intellectual property rights, public-private partnerships and knowledge-based disaster risk reduction and management, and supported further work in these areas.
4. The PWG took note of the presentations made by the UNECE and ESCAP secretariats on possible future PWG activities to be supported by the two Regional Commissions in 2012 and 2013. It noted with appreciation the high relevance of the proposed activities to the knowledge-based development of the SPECA member countries.
5. The PWG adopted the Programme of Work of the SPECA PWG on KBD for 2012-2013 as the basis for its work in the next biennium. It agreed that the details of the envisaged activities in the programme of work could be further elaborated in consultation with the host countries of the future activities and invited SPECA member countries to submit to the UNECE and ESCAP secretariats final comments on the Programme of Work within 30 days after the end of the session.
6. The PWG took note of the report on progress made in advancing the Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway project (TASIM). The PWG agreed to consider possibilities of cooperation with the TASIM secretariat in its future work.
7. The PWG noted the importance of partnerships with all national and international stakeholders. In this regard, it recommended that national representatives actively involve relevant stakeholders in the PWG activities. It recommended that host countries of the future activities of the PWG encourage

representatives of international and regional organizations, in particular those present in the host countries to participate in such activities, in support to the invitations extended by UNECE and ESCAP.

8. The PWG agreed to explore the possibility of holding its fifth session in Kyrgyzstan in 2012 and requested the secretariats of UNECE and ESCAP to hold consultations with the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic to this effect.

9. The PWG expressed its appreciation to UNECE and ESCAP for organizing the fourth session of the SPECA PWG on KBD and to the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan for hosting this important event and hospitality extended to its participants.
