Strengthening of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA)

Tiziana Bonapace
Head,
ESCAP Subregional Office for North and Central Asia
Decline in oil prices and geopolitical tensions leading to a low-growth-high-inflation outlook
North and Central Asia: Opportunities

Infrastructure connectivity as a key to addressing these economic challenges:

• A strategy for diversification of economy through enhanced trade competitiveness and regional and global integration

• Investment as tool for countercyclical fiscal policy and for linking NCA to long term outlook of Asia-Pacific as global growth pole

• Modern infrastructure that supports efficient resource-use and promotes an integrated and coherent framework of sustainable development
ESCAP subregional office: focus areas

Leveraging on increased outward orientation: Regional connectivity through **Transport, ICT and energy infrastructure** development:

- Transport, ICT and energy as mutually beneficial areas of cooperation encompassing key transit countries and potential investors
- Exploiting global boom in infrastructure financing (e.g. World Bank, AIIB) through facilitation and partnerships
- Providing and promoting analytical work by identifying and promoting new corridors of connectivity, e.g. between NCA and SSWA
- Aligning with core development mandates, such as SDGs, Vienna Programme of Action, ESCAP Resolutions 70/1; 71/4
- Cooperating with regional partners, TASIM, WB’s CAFON, ISOC
Introduction to SPECA

United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA)

• To support the member countries in promoting:
  – Intra-regional cooperation
  – Economic development
  – Integration into the economies of Europe and Asia

• Project Working Groups (PWGs):
  – Water and energy resources
  – Transport and border crossing
  – Trade
  – Statistics
  – Knowledge-based development
  – Gender and Economy
ESCAP/ECE SPECA

Strengthening of SPECA as a mechanism of subregional cooperation on implementation of SDGs

• SPECA as one institutional mechanism for member states to coordinate and monitor implementation of SDGs

• SPECA as a platform for promoting synergies with other programmes and connectivity projects, e.g. SPECA/CAREC/TASIM

• Align governance structure of SPECA (GC and Working groups) with SDGs:
Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development

- Established following the decision by the SPECA Governing Council taken at its second session (Berlin, 14 November 2007)

- PWG KBD objectives are:
  - Promote policies facilitate cooperation
  - Support capacity building
  - Serve as a forum for discussion

- PWG KBD works in areas such as
  - Promoting innovation
  - Promoting seamless ICT infrastructure
  - Financing infrastructure, and public-private partnerships
Strengthening SPECA

- 9th session of the Governing Council and a Brainstorming session
  - SPECA is UN-driven; re-examine approach
  - Internal evaluation through questionnaires
  - Results will be presented next GC
  - Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan
  - Discussion with UN partners on strengthening SPECA within the context of Post-2015 arrangements
SPECA in Post-2015 Development Agenda

• SPECA’s role could be strengthened by simultaneous progress in:
  – Increased political support and involvement by participating countries
  – More in-kind and financial support to SPECA activities by participating countries
  – More pro-active involvement of participating countries in donor coordination
  – Improved coordination, e.g. through TASIM/CAREC/SPECA linkages and others such as CAFON
  - Enhanced relevance as an institutional mechanism for monitoring implementation of SDGs
ESCAP’s support for SPECA

• Support the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action

• Strengthen its cooperation with SPECA

• ESCAP will continue to support SPECA efforts through:
  – Focus on regional connectivity using ESCAP’s region-wide outreach
  – Establishing coordination and cooperation with other programmes and organizations
  – Continuing close coordination with partner organizations, such as World Bank
Thank you

For more information:
Tiziana Bonapace
Head
ESCAP SONCA
bonapace.unescap@un.org