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Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships

Thirteenth session

Geneva, 25-27 March 2019

Report of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships on its thirteenth session

I. Overview

1. The thirteenth session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships was held from 25 to 27 March 2019.
2. The Officer-in-Charge of the UNECE Economic Cooperation and Trade Division opened the session, noting the crucial importance of both innovation and public-private partnerships (PPPs) for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The results of this session will help ECE develop standards and best practice guidelines in these areas, advising member States on necessary reforms and devising ways of monitoring and supporting progress towards the SDGs.

II. Attendance

3. A total of 163 participants attended the meeting. The session was attended by representatives from the following 25 ECE member States: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, Cyprus, France, Georgia, Germany, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States and Uzbekistan.
4. Representatives of Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Qatar, Singapore, Uganda participated under article 11 of the Commission's terms of reference.
5. The session was attended by representatives of the European Commission.
6. The following specialized agencies in the United Nations system were represented: the International Labour Organisation, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, UNICEF, and the World Bank.
7. Other organizations (local authorities, academic institutions, international organisations outside the UN system, non-governmental organisations and private sector entities) participated at the invitation of the secretariat.



III. Adoption of the agenda (Agenda item 1)

Documentation:

Annotated provisional agenda (ECE/CECI/2019/1).

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The Committee adopted the agenda for its thirteenth session.

IV. Election of officers (Agenda item 2)

8. The term of office of Mr Rafis Abazov (Kazakhstan) has expired. Mr Dmitry Poladenko (Belarus) stepped down as Vice-Chairperson.

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The Committee elected Mr Siarhei Shlychkou (Belarus), Mr Stefano Firpo (Italy) and Mr Medet Dyussembayev (Kazakhstan) as vice-chairs for two-year terms of office. It thanked the outgoing vice-chairs Mr Dmitry Poladenko (Belarus) and Mr Rafis Abazov (Kazakhstan) for their service.

V. Substantive segment on Making a Difference – Measuring and understanding the impact of innovation policies and PPP projects on achieving the sustainable development goals (Agenda item 3)

9. The Chairperson's summary of the discussions was presented under agenda item 5. The Committee thanked the speakers and participants for the productive exchange of experiences, and their contributions to the discussion on measuring and understanding the impact of innovation policies and PPP projects on achieving the sustainable development goals.

VI. Implementation of the programme of work (Agenda item 4)

A. Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (Agenda item 4(a))

Documentation:

Report of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies on its eleventh session (ECE/CECI/ICP/2018/2)

The Fourth Industrial Revolution – Reshaping Innovation Policies for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth (ECE/CECI/2019/3)

Draft Outline for a SPECA Strategy on Innovation for Sustainable Development (ECE/CECI/2019/4)

Updating the methodology for national Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.1)

Assessment Framework and Measurement Methodology for the sub-regional Innovation Policy Outlook (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.2)

10. The secretariat drew the attention of the Committee to the Report of the eleventh session of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (ECE/CECI/ICP/2018/2) and the related policy document “The Fourth Industrial Revolution – Reshaping Innovation Policies for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth” (ECE/CECI/2019/3).

11. The secretariat emphasized the critical role which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development assigns to innovation for achieving the SDGs, and the many ways in which the expertise and the activities of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies can contribute to advancing the 2030 Agenda, including the development of good practices and policies on how innovation can be fostered in areas critical for sustainable development; the national Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews, which analyse national policies in the light of international best practice and make recommendations for improvement; and the follow-up policy advisory and capacity-building activities that assist Governments, upon their request, with the implementation of selected policy recommendations.

12. The secretariat briefed the delegates on the work undertaken by the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies (TOS-ICP) since the previous session, including the results of the conference on the Fourth Industrial Revolution, the launch of the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Kyrgyzstan, the ongoing work on the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Georgia, the revision of the review methodology, progress on the sub-regional Innovation Policy Outlook, the work on Innovation Policy Principles, progress on developing an Innovation for Sustainable Development Strategy for the Economies of Central Asia, a training on high-growth enterprises in Belarus, a sub-regional workshop on Innovation Strategy, Technology Applications and Infrastructure for the SDGs in Azerbaijan, and other capacity building activities following up on national innovation for sustainable development reviews.

Mandate of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies

13. The secretariat noted that the Committee had last renewed the mandate of the Team of Specialists at its session in 2017 for two years until 2019 and invited the Committee to decide on the renewal of the Team's mandate for an additional two years until 2021.

International policy dialogue

14. As part of the Team's eleventh session, an applied policy seminar was held on the topic "The Fourth Industrial Revolution – Reshaping Innovation Policies for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth". Sustainable and inclusive growth is part of Sustainable Development Goal 8, which is one of the SDGs progress on which will be reviewed at the global High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2019. The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development held on 21-22 March 2019, whose results will contribute the perspective of the UNECE region to the global Forum, also discussed SDG 8. The applied policy seminar held at the session of the Team of Specialists generated valuable insights for the discussions at the Regional Forum and thus will also contribute to the debate at the global level.

15. The Team identified the speed of change and its impact on systems as the main feature of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It is evolving rapidly, potentially affecting almost every economic sector everywhere, and transforming entire systems of production, management and governance. On the one hand, this carries the risk of polarizing labour markets which could lead to economic insecurity and precarious employment, and of causing higher inequalities in the distribution of income and wealth within and across countries. On the other hand, new business ideas and technologies promise radical gains in efficiency and productivity and completely new economic opportunities. To realize the opportunities, a new paradigm of industrial policy making is needed that works across sectors and disciplines and integrates all level of governments and stakeholders. Risks can be contained through investment in education and infrastructures and appropriate competition and regulatory policies.

Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews

16. The Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Kyrgyzstan was launched in the country during a conference hosted by the national focal point Kyrgyz Patent. It contains 24 recommendations on improving innovation policy in Kyrgyzstan with some 80 specific policy actions. Work on the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Georgia was started with a preparatory mission of the secretariat to the country.

17. A discussion was held at the eleventh session of the Team of Specialists on options for revising the methodology underlying the national Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.1). The revision should better mainstream sustainable development aspects into the structure of the reviews and incorporate lessons learned from previous reviews as well as the latest thinking on innovation policy making, while ensuring consistency with new work streams of the Team, notably the Innovation Policy Outlook and the Innovation Policy Principles.

18. The Team agreed that the National Innovation System paradigm is still a useful concept for analysing innovation policies, but that there is scope for modifications to better fit the particularities of countries with economies in transition. It also agreed that the structure of the Reviews could be improved by adding more chapters that focus on specific policy issues of particular relevance to the country under review, and that more systematic reporting back on reform progress, including at the sessions of the Committee or the Team of Specialists would be useful. On the question of mainstreaming sustainable development, the Team agreed that there is at present no generally accepted good practice on how to do this, and that more work is required on this issue.

Innovation Policy Outlook

19. The secretariat informed the Committee on the progress in the implementation of the pilot UNECE Subregional Innovation Policy Outlook. The pilot methodology and assessment questionnaire were elaborated (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.2). A project inception mission was conducted to Georgia to launch the testing of the methodology and assessment questionnaire. The testing phase is planned to be concluded in May 2019. An updated methodology and assessment questionnaire will subsequently be applied to the other participating countries.

20. In the ensuing discussion, panellists agreed that innovation policy impact assessments are very complex due to the multitude of factors that influence policy outcomes, that effective coordination of policies across various government departments is an essential feature of good innovation policy governance, and that, given the difficulties in measuring policy impact, it can be very informative to assess, as a proxy for impact, whether Governments follow policy making processes that are considered good practice.

21. The delegation of Armenia noted that it expects the UNECE sub-regional Innovation Policy Outlook to lead to beneficial peer learning and sharing of good practices in innovation policy making between participating countries.

22. The delegation of Georgia noted that it expects the UNECE sub-regional Innovation Policy Outlook methodology to foster inter-ministerial and inter-agency co-ordination and enhance public/private consultation in the area of innovation policy.

23. The delegation of Kazakhstan underlined the importance of carefully selecting suitable government representatives to fill out the government self-assessment questionnaires; he also highlighted the value of involving the private sector in policy assessments in fostering public-private dialogue.

24. The delegation of Azerbaijan expressed its confidence that the Innovation Policy Outlook will foster regional policy learning. The country has established a number of incubators and start-up centres. It considers it a priority to develop the innovation ecosystem. An Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Development Agency, an Innovation Agency and a High Tech Park have been established.

25. The delegation of Belarus drew the attention of the Committee to the consideration of risk in state innovation policy. Despite some policy reforms, risk aversion in the academic sector remains, especially where funding is received from the state budget. An Innovation Fund has established for CIS countries, and has been a major source of funding. Monitoring of the effectiveness of innovation policies is a focus area for 2019, as are stimulating innovation in the private sector and intellectual property rights reform.

26. The delegation of Ukraine informed the Committee of the renewed interest in and commitment to the promotion of innovation in the country and the additional opportunities for cooperation with UNECE which this entails.

Innovation Policy Principles

27. Following the mandate given to the Team by the Committee at its twelfth session, the Team held a discussion on the scope, modalities of development and possible content of Innovation Policy Principles. The Team decided to establish a task force under the guidance of its bureau to drive the work on Innovation Policy Principles. A first discussion on the remit and modalities of work of the task force has been held.

Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia

28. The annual session of the SPECA Working Group on Knowledge-Based Development was organized together with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and hosted by the Government of Azerbaijan in Baku. A capacity-building workshop on “Innovation Strategy, Technology Applications and Infrastructure for the SDGs” was held back to back with the session.

29. The SPECA Working Group also discussed the draft outline of a SPECA Strategy on Innovation for Sustainable Development which had been requested by SPECA countries at SPECA Governing Council held in Dushanbe in December 2017.

National and sub-regional capacity building

30. A sub-regional capacity building workshop on “Strengthening Technology Transfer Capacities of Countries in Central Asia” was organized together with the Asia-Pacific Centre for Technology Transfer of ESCAP and the participation of UNCTAD. The workshop was hosted by the National Agency for Technological Development of Kazakhstan in Astana. The focus of the workshop was on building capacity on cross-border knowledge and technology transfer for both policy makers and businesses.

31. A sub-regional capacity building workshop on “Promoting innovative, high-growth enterprises in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus” was organized together with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and hosted by the National Academy of Public Administration in Belarus. Innovation policy and SME policy stakeholders from Eastern Europe and the Caucasus learned about the characteristics, needs, and constraints to innovative, high-growth entrepreneurship, as well as the rationale for supporting Innovative, High Growth Enterprises, and different approaches to adapting or designing responsive policies, institutions, and mechanisms in place with limited fiscal resources.

32. A national capacity-building workshop on Technology Foresight Methodology was held together with the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus in Minsk. At the workshop technology foresight experts from three leading countries shared their expertise and good practices.

33. The delegation of Kyrgyzstan thanked the secretariat for delivering the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review, which will be most useful for innovation policy reforms in Kyrgyzstan. Based on the recommendations therein, Kyrgyzstan will develop new policy instruments to modernize industry and to improve innovation in the private sector. A Roadmap for the implementation of policy reforms is being developed. Kyrgyzstan invited UNECE to continue supporting innovation policy reforms in the country, including on legal and regulatory reforms.

34. The delegation of Kyrgyzstan also confirmed that the next session of the SPECA Working Group on Knowledge-Based Development will be hosted by Kyrgyzstan, with a provisional date in June 2019, and requested that a thematic seminar on innovation policy be organized back to back with it.

35. The delegation of Belarus thanked the secretariat for supporting the follow-up to the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review, in particular the two capacity-building workshops on technology foresight methodology and on promoting innovative, high-growth enterprises. As a result of the analysis of the Review, there has been investment in innovation infrastructure, and for every dollar spent on innovation from the state budget, 6 dollars were mobilized from other sources. 45,000 new jobs have been created.

36. The delegation of Armenia gave an overview of recent developments on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) policy in the country. Armenia's vision is to have by 2020 a knowledge-based economy that is competitive within the European Research Area. The Innovation Performance Review of Armenia and the follow-up support from the secretariat have been valuable for policy reform.

37. The delegation of Tajikistan requested additional support for the implementation of innovation policy reforms in follow-up to their Innovation Performance Review.

38. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the useful and concrete work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies and thanked the experts and the donors for their in-kind and financial contributions.

Decision 2019 - 4a.1

The Committee expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies as described in the report of its eleventh session (ECE/CECI/ICP/2018/2) and welcomed the focus on the key role of innovation in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the international conference "The Fourth Industrial Revolution – reshaping innovation policies for sustainable and inclusive growth", which was held as part of the Team's session, and the good practices developed on this topic. The Committee endorsed the corresponding applied policy document (ECE/CECI/2019/3) and requested the secretariat to electronically disseminate it and to make use of its conclusions in future capacity-building activities and policy advisory work.

Decision 2019 - 4a.2

The Committee noted that promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all is one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) being reviewed in 2019 at the global level and encouraged the secretariat to bring the results of the Committee's work on the Fourth Industrial Revolution – reshaping innovation policies for sustainable and inclusive growth to the attention of the 2019 Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development.

Decision 2019 - 4a.3

The Committee decided to renew the mandate of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies for an additional two years until 2021.

Decision 2019 - 4a.4

The Committee welcomed the launch of the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Kyrgyzstan and the draft action plan which the Government of Kyrgyzstan prepared in response. The Committee invited the Team of Specialists to work with the Government of Kyrgyzstan on facilitating the implementation of the policy recommendations, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary resources.

Decision 2019 - 4a.5

The Committee welcomed the initiation of an Innovation for Sustainable Development Review for Georgia and looked forward to receiving the findings and policy recommendations. The Committee also requested the secretariat to initiate in 2020 and 2021, respectively, Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews in response to the requests received from the Governments of Moldova and Armenia.

The Committee welcomed the progress made with innovation policy reform in Armenia, Belarus and Kyrgyzstan and encouraged the Governments of other member States which have undertaken ECE innovation reviews to provide the Committee with updates on progress with innovation policy reform as appropriate

Decision 2019 - 4a.6

The Committee welcomed the progress made on the draft Innovation for Sustainable Development Strategy for the SPECA region and invited the Team of Specialists to

continue contribute to this effort within its mandate and subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

Decision 2019 - 4a.7

The Committee welcomed the progress made with updating the methodology for the national Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.1).

Decision 2019 - 4a.8

The Committee also welcomed the progress made on creating a task force to develop Innovation Policy Principles.

Decision 2019 - 4a.9

The Committee noted with appreciation the policy advisory and capacity-building work carried out by the Team of Specialists, including in conjunction with the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia.

Decision 2019 - 4a.10

The Committee requested that the secretariat follow up, subject to available extrabudgetary resources, on the interest expressed by the Governments of Armenia, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in policy advisory and capacity-building services, including to support the implementation of recommendations from Innovation Performance Reviews and Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews.

Decision 2019 - 4a.11

The Committee welcomed the progress made with developing the methodology for a sub-regional Innovation Policy Outlook for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.2) and the results of the associated pilot mission to Georgia.

B. Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships (Agenda item 4(b))

Documentation:

Report of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on its second session (ECE/CECI/WP/2018/2)

Declaration on a Zero Tolerance Approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/4)

Standard on PPPs in Railways (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/6)

Standard on PPPs in Renewable Energy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/7)

Standard on PPPs in Roads (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/8)

Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs for the Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/CECI/2019/5)

Introduction to People-first Public-Private Partnerships in support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/CECI/2019/6)

Putting the Guiding Principles on People-first Public-Private Partnerships into practice (ECE/CECI/2019/7)

Measuring and scaling up the implementation and impact of UNECE PPP standards, guiding principles, best practices, declarations and recommendations (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.8)

Report of the meeting of the UNECE-affiliated International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.9)

39. The Chairperson drew the attention of the Committee to the Report of the Working Party on Public-Private Partnerships on its second session (ECE/CECI/WP/2018/2) and the rest of the documentation before the Committee under this sub-agenda item listed above for

decision or information. She asked the secretariat to provide a status report of the PPP work since the twelfth session in March 2018.

40. The secretariat informed the Committee that the focus of the UNECE's PPP work continued to be on the People-first PPP model through the PPP standards, guiding principles, best practices, best practices and recommendations, and its voluntary use and implementation in countries in support of the SDGs.

International PPP standards for validation

41. The UNECE International PPP Centre of Excellence continued its work to elaborate international standards on people-first PPPs for the SDGs. The standards on PPPs in Railways (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/6), Renewable Energy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/7) and Roads (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/8) were endorsed by the Working Party at its second session with a recommendation to the Committee to:

- (a) Validate that all stages of the process for developing international PPP standards have been followed pursuant to the procedure set out in ECE/CECI/2015/7; and
- (b) Recommend their publication and voluntary use and implementation by member States.

Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs for the UN SDGs

42. The secretariat informed the Committee that the work on the guiding principles on People-first PPPs for the UN SDGs (ECE/CECI/2019/5) and on the People-first outcomes (ECE/CECI/2019/6) has now been concluded and both documents have been endorsed by the Working Party at its second session with a recommendation for adoption by the Committee. The Working Party also endorsed a document on Putting the Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs into practice (ECE/CECI/2019/7), and is recommending the Committee to adopt it at this session.

43. The secretariat is producing an executive summary of the guiding principles to facilitate their use and implementation in countries and argued that the guiding principles need to be maintained and take on board key learnings, ongoing development and policy experience, as well as discussions by the international community in multiple forums to exchange views and suggestions.

Declaration on a Zero Tolerance Approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement

44. The secretariat reiterated the importance of dissemination and promotion of the standard on a Zero Tolerance Approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement validated by the Committee at its last session, and informed the Committee that the work on a voluntary declaration as a tool to facilitate implementation of the standard has now been concluded. The declaration on a Zero Tolerance Approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/4) was endorsed by the Working Party at its second session with a recommendation for adoption by the Committee.

PPP standards under preparation

45. The secretariat provided a progress report on the work on draft standards at various levels of preparation, namely;

- (a) Water supply and sanitation;
- (b) Urban transit rail; and
- (c) Model law on PPP/concessions (jointly undertaken with EBRD and in coordination with UNCITRAL).

Other initiatives and capacity building activities

46. The secretariat continued expanding the database of case studies as part of a campaign to collect 500 case studies that demonstrate the People-first PPP outcomes and how these projects are meeting the SDGs. The last batch of 60 case studies were presented at the third UNECE International People-first PPP Forum in Geneva on 7-9 May 2018. The 120 case studies collected so far are available on the website. These case studies will be scored against the People-first PPP outcomes once the People-first impact assessment tool

presented under agenda item 3 and discussed at a kick-off meeting on 25 March 2019 is developed. The secretariat will prepare a report of the meeting on 25 March 2019 as well as regular status reports to the Working Party at its Bureau on this topic.

47. The secretariat briefed the Committee on its outreach activities with other UN bodies, in particular UN DESA and the other regional commissions. The UNECE work on People-first PPPs was recognised in the 2019 report of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development¹ as a contribution to sustainable development. The secretariat will be the lead host of the PPP discussion at the SDG Investment Fair at the UN Headquarters in New York from 15 to 17 April 2019, where the focus of the discussion will be on People-first PPPs.

48. The International PPP Specialist Centres continued to play a crucial role in promoting the UNECE People-first approach. A meeting of the International PPP Specialist Centres affiliated to the UNECE International PPP Centre of Excellence was held in Beijing, China on 3-4 December 2018. The discussion focused on:

- (a) The impact of the Centres;
- (b) Their role in the implementation of the evaluation methodology;
- (c) Capacity building and training; and
- (d) Governance issues, including a draft code of conduct for the Centres.

An outcome document, with a number of commitments and tasks was agreed by the Centres, including an agreement for a rotating six-month chairmanship (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.9). The next meeting of the Centres will be hosted by the International PPP Specialist Centre in France and will take place in Paris on 1-2 April 2019.

49. During the reporting period, the following policy advisory missions and capacity-building activities were organized by the UNECE International PPP Centre of Excellence:

(a) The Third edition of the UNECE International PPP Forum “Scaling up: Meeting the challenges of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through People-first PPPs”, was held in Geneva (7-8 May 2018);

(b) An International Conference on Implementing People-first PPPs for the UN SDGs, jointly organised with the Ministry of Economic Development of Ukraine, the Kiev City State Administration, the Ukrainian PPP Development Support Center, and with the support of the World Bank Group, was held in Kiev (5-6 June 2018);

(c) Four Regional PPP Workshops we held jointly with the PPP Unit of Belarus in the cities of Brest, Grodno, Minsk and Vitebsk (2018);

(d) A PPP readiness assessment was prepared by the PPP Business Advisory Board in Kazan to assess the preparedness of Tatarstan to undertake People-first PPPs, Kazan, Russian Federation (24-26 July 2018). A follow up activity was organised in Kazan on 13 December 2018 to present the PPP readiness assessment report and discuss follow up activities;

(e) An International Conference on the role of People-first PPPs in support of the SDGs, was jointly organised with the Ministry of Economy of Belarus, in Minsk (12 September 2018); and

(f) A consultative visit of the PPP Business Advisory Board to Sofia co-organised with the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, with a focus on PPPs in the roads and water sectors, was held in Bulgaria (19-20 September 2018).

Status report on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between the UNECE and China

¹ The report of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development is available at: https://developmentfinance.un.org/sites/developmentfinance.un.org/files/FSDR_2019_AUV_1March2019.pdf

50. The secretariat gave a status report on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the UNECE and the National Development and Reform Commission of China on 14 May 2017. The aim of this agreement is to launch a capacity building programme to support member States along the Belt and Road initiative with their PPP implementation based on three interlined pillars, namely:

- (a) A policy dialogue to improve cooperation among the participating countries;
- (b) A comprehensive national PPP capacity building programme; and
- (c) The identification of 10 flagship projects that can be scaled up and replicated in other countries.

51. The secretariat informed the Committee that the PPP dialogue for Belt and Road countries was launched at the second session of the Working Party in November 2018. The Working Party agreed on the areas for discussed at the next dialogue, which will be held subject to agreement by the member States and the availability of extrabudgetary resources. The next dialogue was included in document ECE/CECI/2019/8 as one of the planned activities for 2019 and submitted for the Committee's consideration under agenda item 6. A request for funding has been made by the secretariat to UN DESA under the UN Peace and Development Fund.

Use and implementation of PPP standards, guiding principles, declarations and recommendations

52. The secretariat introduced document ECE/CECI/2019/INF.8 and the five recommendations therein to facilitate the use and voluntary implementation of PPP standards, guiding principles, declarations and recommendations.

53. A number of speakers highlighted the advantages as well as the challenges to implement the UNECE PPP standards, guiding principles, best practices, declarations and recommendations, especially given their non-binding nature. During the discussion, different actions and strategies were identified to scale up the use and implementation of the UNECE normative PPP products, namely:

(a) In order to demonstrate impact, there is a need for a regular and better monitoring of the use and voluntary implementation of the People-first approach and the different UNECE normative PPP products. A voluntary reporting mechanism - where countries would report on their use and implementation to either the Working Party on PPPs or the International PPP Forum - would improve the monitoring of their implementation and use;

(b) A greater dissemination and promotion of UNECE normative PPP products is needed. Strategic partnerships, within or outside the UN, would help doing so and scale up the implementation and impact of the UNECE normative PPP products; and

(c) Given the challenges with resources and the technical and institutional capacities of governments to undertake PPPs, an implementation guide would be useful to assist countries in the application of the UNECE normative PPP products, and complement existing capacity building programmes.

54. In view of the above-mentioned challenges and the possible strategies to address them, the speakers recommended that further actions were needed to promote the use and implementation of PPP standards, guiding principles, best practices, declarations and recommendations.

55. Speaking on the impact assessment tool, the delegation of Germany argued that the 10 Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs provide a good basis, along with the People-first outcomes, on which the tool could be developed. The delegation also remarked that the timeline proposed in the Project Proposal was too optimistic and that it should be adjusted accordingly. It also requested the secretariat to provide a status report on this work to the Working Party at its next session.

56. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the useful and concrete work of the Working Party and thanked the experts and the donors for their in-kind and financial contributions.

Decision 2019 - 4b.1

The Committee expressed its satisfaction with the continued focus of the work on the People-first PPP model through its standards, guiding principles, best practices and recommendations, and on its voluntary implementation in countries in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also endorsed the report of the second session of the Working Party on PPPs (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/2) held on 20-21 November 2018.

Decision 2019 – 4b.2

The Committee validated that all stages of the process for developing international PPP standards have been followed (ECE/CECI/2015/7, paragraph 12) in the case of the following three standards:

- (a) The Standard on PPPs in Railways (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/6);
 - (b) The Standard on PPPs in Renewable Energy (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/7);
- and
- (c) The Standard on PPPs in Roads (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/8).

The Committee also recommended their publication and voluntary implementation by member States.

Decision 2019 – 4b.3

The Committee expressed its satisfaction with the successful conclusion of the work by the Working Party on PPPs on a number of important normative and policy documents, namely:

- (a) The Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs for the Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/CECI/2019/5);
- (b) The Introduction to People-first PPPs in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/CECI/2019/6);
- (c) Putting the Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs into practice (ECE/CECI/2019/7); and
- (d) The Declaration on a Zero Tolerance Approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement (ECE/CECI/WP/PPP/2018/4).

The Committee approved these documents and requested the Bureau and the secretariat to assist member States with their voluntary implementation.

Decision 2019 – 4b.4

The Committee took note of the status of the PPP standards and recommendations under preparation, especially the advanced versions of the standards on urban rail and water and sanitation, and called on the Team Leaders and the secretariat to work closely with the Bureau of the Working Party in order to finalise these documents and submit them as official documents at the third session of the Working Party on PPPs in December 2019.

The Committee also took note of the advanced status of the work on a model PPP/concession law jointly undertaken with EBRD. With regards to the work of UNCITRAL on the revised PPP guide and model provisions, which is expected to be finalised and adopted by UNCITRAL in July 2019, the Committee called on the Project Team Leader and the secretariat to monitor this work and ensure that where possible common agreed language is used to avoid contradiction between the UNECE work and UNCITRAL's. The model PPP/concession law's content shall take account of UNCITRAL's work and focus on the complementary guidance incorporating specific elements dealing with People-first approaches. The Committee also urged the Team Leader and the secretariat to finalise this work and to work closely with the Bureau of the Working Party and with UNCITRAL for its successful conclusion in the coming months.

Decision 2019 - 4b.5

The Committee took note of the work carried out so far and the discussion under agenda item 3 on the People-first PPP impact assessment tool consisting of an evaluation

methodology for scoring PPP projects against the People-first outcomes and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Committee also took note of the kick-off meeting on 25 March 2019 under the leadership of the two co-leaders of the Project Team set up by the Working Party on PPPs to elaborate the People-first PPP impact assessment tool with a focus on its development, validation and implementation.

The Committee urged the Project Team leaders and the secretariat to work closely with the Bureau of the Working Party. It also requested the Secretariat to prepare a progress report including possible proposals for an assessment tool at the next session of the Working Party. The Committee also requested the Secretariat to explore working closely with other stakeholders, including other UN bodies and multilateral development banks.

Decision 2019 - 4b.6

The Committee took note of the strong reference to the UNECE work on People-first PPPs in the 2019 report of the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development as a contribution to sustainable development. The Committee requested the secretariat to urge other UN bodies such as UN DESA, the other Regional Commissions, UNCTAD, other UN agencies and the World Bank, to adopt the same People-first approach to PPPs.

In this regard, the Committee expressed its satisfaction with the Bureau of the Working Party and the secretariat for their joint-effort to secure the selection of UNECE by UN DESA as the lead host of the PPP discussion at the SDG Investment Fair at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 15 to 17 April 2019. This event will be attended by representatives of member States and other stakeholders including UN agencies, the private sector, NGOs and academia.

Decision 2019 – 4b.7

The Committee took note of the main points and follow up action agreed by the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence affiliated to the UNECE and the Centres' commitments in the outcome document (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.9). It also noted that the next meeting of the Centres hosted by the Specialist Centre of Excellence in PPP law, policy and institutions will take place in Paris, France on 1-2 April 2019.

The Committee also took note of the draft code of conduct for the Centres – designed to improve their governance – and requested the Bureau of the Working Party and the secretariat to finalise the document and submit it to the Working Party for its consideration and endorsement at its third session in December 2019.

Decision 2019 – 4b.8

The Committee took note of the PPP policy advisory and capacity-building work carried out since its last session. It requested that the secretariat follow up, subject to available extrabudgetary funding, on the interest expressed by Governments in new policy advisory and capacity-building services.

Decision 2019 – 4b.9

The Committee took note of the status report by the secretariat on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the UNECE and China on 14 May 2017 to support member States along the Belt and Road initiative with their PPP implementation focusing on three interrelated capacity building pillars, namely:

- (a) A policy dialogue to improve cooperation among the participating countries;
- (b) A comprehensive national PPP capacity building programme; and
- (c) The identification of 10 flagship projects that can be scaled up and replicated in other countries.

The Committee also encouraged the secretariat to make further efforts to raise extrabudgetary resources to undertake this capacity building programme.

Furthermore, the Committee urged the secretariat to dovetail its activities with other initiatives and processes such as the EU-Asia Connectivity Strategy and to report back on the issue at the next session.

Decision 2019 – 4b.10

The Committee took note of the five recommendations on the voluntary implementation of UNECE PPP standards, guiding principles, declarations and recommendations (ECE/CECI/2019/INF.8), and requested:

(a) The Bureau of the Working Party on PPPs and the secretariat to submit a proposal with recommendations to the Working Party for its consideration at its next session in December 2019;

(b) The Working Party on PPPs to make recommendations to the Committee at its next session on implementation and impact of UNECE PPP standards, guiding principles, best practices, declarations and recommendations; and

(c) The secretariat to hold a dedicated session with multi-stakeholder participation on the voluntary implementation and impact of UNECE PPP standards, guiding principles, best practices, declarations and recommendations at the International PPP Forum in May 2019.

C. Joint Activities (Agenda item 4(c))

57. ECE organised the 2018 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development at the Palais des Nations on March 21-22, 2018. The Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies and the Working Party on PPPs contributed to a roundtable on the topic “Towards a Circular Economy: Innovation for Sustainable Value Chains”, in cooperation with the Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards and the UN Centre on Electronic Trade Facilitation (CEFACT).

58. The secretariat briefed the Committee on the preliminary results of the independent evaluation of the extra-budgetary projects “Competitiveness, innovative policies and public-private partnerships: Capacity building for civil servants and business associations”.

59. The secretariat thanked the donors whose financial contributions greatly contributed to the Committee’s work, i.e. the Governments of the Russian Federation and of Sweden, Tsinghua University in China and City University of Hong Kong.

Decision 2019 - 4c.1

The Committee welcomed the results of the roundtable “The Growth We Want: Solutions for Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth”, which was held as part of the 2019 ECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, and which was organized jointly with the UN Centre on Electronic Trade Facilitation (UN/CEFACT).

Decision 2019 – 4c.2

The Committee noted the preliminary results of the independent evaluation of the extra-budgetary project “Competitiveness, innovative policies and public-private partnerships: Capacity building for civil servants and business associations” and requested the secretariat to take the evaluator’s recommendations, once finalized, into account in the design and implementation of future extra-budgetary projects.

Decision 2019 – 4c.3

The Committee thanked the donors whose financial and in-kind contributions greatly contributed to the Committee’s work on developing good practices and standards, analysing national policies, and providing policy advice and capacity building for the implementation of policy reforms, i.e. the Governments of the Russian Federation and of Sweden, Tsinghua University in China and City University of Hong Kong.

The Committee emphasized the importance of financial and in-kind contributions for the success of its capacity-building activities and policy advisory services as well as for extending their reach. It invited member States and other donors to continue to provide support to its activities.

VII. Main conclusions of the substantive segment (Agenda item 5)

60. The Chairperson presented the summary of the discussion during the high-level substantive segment and opened the floor for a discussion of the summary with a view to identifying suggestions for follow-up activities.

Decision 2018 – 5.1

The Committee noted the main conclusions of the high-level segment, which are contained in the Chairperson's summary. It requested that the Chairperson's summary be annexed to the report of the thirteenth session of the Committee.

Decision 2018 – 5.2

The Committee invited its Bureau and the secretariat to further explore specific ways in which the Committee might contribute to measuring the impact of innovation policies and PPP project on achieving the SDGs, in cooperation, as appropriate, with other ECE intergovernmental bodies.

VIII. Intersessional Implementation Plan for 2019-2020 (Agenda items 6)

Documentation:

Inter-sessional implementation plan for 2019-2020 (ECE/CECI/2019/ 8)

61. The secretariat presented the inter-sessional implementation plan for activities in the remainder of 2019 and until the next session in 2020.

62. The delegations of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan made requests for additional activities and modifications to proposed in document ECE/CECI/2019/8. These requests are reflected in the implementation plan for 2019-2020 in Annex II to the present document.

63. The delegation of France requested that the ECE secretariat engage in a dialogue with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on how to best implement the People-first Guiding Principle no.10 (Fiscal Sustainability) and suggested that ECE proposes to the IMF to contribute on this issue on the occasion of the next International PPP Forum in May 2019.

64. The delegation of the European Union requested the secretariat to ensure that the Second PPP Dialogue for Belt and Road Countries will be held outside the inter-governmental structures of UNECE and its scope will remain within logical limits and in a contained format. The secretariat clarified that the scope of the Dialogue had been agreed by the Working Party to be limited to the six thematic areas specified in the report of its second session (ECE/CECI/PPP/2018/2, conclusion 2018 – 4.9, p.9).

Decision 2019 – 6.1

The Committee adopted the inter-sessional implementation plan for the activities to be undertaken in 2019 and until the next session in 2020, to be annexed to the report of the thirteenth session of the Committee.

IX. Programme of Work for 2020 (Agenda item 7)

(a) Proposed programme budget for 2020: Part II. Programme plan and performance information of the Economic Cooperation and Integration subprogramme

(b) Draft programme of work of the Economic Cooperation and Integration subprogramme for 2020

Documentation:

Proposed programme budget for 2020: Part II. Programme plan and performance information of the ECI subprogramme (ECE/CECI/2019/9)

Draft programme of work of the ECI subprogramme for 2020 (ECE/CECI/2019/10)

65. The secretariat explained that the United Nations General Assembly at its 72nd session decided to move from a biannual to an annual budget after the current biennium, i.e. from 2020 onwards. The secretariat presented the programme budget of the subprogramme for information and a draft programme of work for discussion and adoption.

Decision 2019 – 7.1

The Committee took note of the document “Proposed programme budget for 2020: Part II. Programme plan and performance information of the ECI subprogramme” (ECE/CECI/2019/9) and endorsed the Programme of Work of the ECI Subprogramme for 2020 (ECE/CECI/2019/10), including the proposed publications.

X. Areas of common interest with other Economic Commission for Europe bodies and international organisations (Agenda item 8)

66. The secretariat presented areas of common interest as well as ongoing and potential collaboration with other ECE bodies, including in the framework of the new nexus approach proposed by the Executive Secretary of ECE, the forthcoming 68th session of the Economic Commission for Europe, and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

67. There are also opportunities for cross-sectoral cooperation in the framework of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia, jointly with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

68. The secretariat also highlighted the cooperation with other UN agencies in the Inter-agency Taskforce on Financing for Development, and the Inter-agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development.

69. Delegates requested the secretariat to cooperate with other UN agencies including UNCTAD and the other Regional Commissions in order to ensure that the Committee’s expertise can also benefit countries outside the ECE region.

Decision 2019 – 8.1

The Committee took note of areas of common interest with other ECE bodies and international organizations, including on smart sustainable cities at the 68th session of the Economic Commission for Europe, and welcomed the planned collaboration to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It invited its Bureau and the secretariat to continue to explore additional opportunities for collaboration with other ECE bodies and international organizations in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. The Committee also invited its Chair to share the results of the discussions under this agenda item with the bureaus of the other sectoral committees under the ECE.

The Committee further invited the Bureau and the secretariat to engage in a dialogue with the Sustainable Infrastructure Foundation on how the multilateral platform SOURCE could support the implementation of the SDGs and especially the Guiding Principles and the standards on People-first PPPs.

XI. Proposal to change of the name of subprogramme 4 to align it with the name of the Committee (Agenda item 9)

70. The Executive Committee of the Economic Commission for Europe at its 75th session in 2015, with reference to paragraphs 13, 14 and 31 (g) of Commission Decision A (65) on the outcome of the Review of the 2005 reform of ECE, decided to rename the

Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration as the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships (ECE/EX/24). The name of the corresponding sub-programme 4 “Economic Cooperation and Integration” was not changed at the time.

71. The secretariat proposed to change the name of the sub-programme to “Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships” in order to align its name with the current name of the Committee overseeing it. In the view of the secretariat, the proposed change would not have any implications for mandates or resources.

72. The delegation of the Russian Federation reminded the Committee that the decision not to change the name of the sub-programme in 2015 had been the result of a fragile compromise and stated that, for this reason, the Russian Federation is not prepared to agree to the proposal at this time.

Decision 2019 - 9.1

The Committee considered that this issue required further consultations and decided not to approve the proposal at this time.

XII. Other business (Agenda item 10)

73. The secretariat informed the Committee of the planned date for its fourteenth session.

74. The secretariat informed the Committee that due to the ongoing renovation of the Palais des Nations (“Strategic Heritage Plan”), conference services would be limited for up to six years starting in October 2019. The United Nations Office at Geneva is in the process of working out alternative arrangements.

75. The delegations of France and Germany made the following points to be adhered to in future sessions:

(a) Ensure that delegates are alerted by the secretariat each time a new pre-session document is posted online in compliance with Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure, and provide a deadline for consultations among member States where appropriate;

(b) Upon request of a member State following the approval during committee sessions, place specific decisions under a silent procedure consultation among representatives of member States for a period of two weeks;

(c) Provide a list of registered participants to member States in advance of sessions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies; and

(d) Ensure that any proposals for amendments made by representatives of member States during the sessions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies are documented and reported, even if rejected.

Decision 2019 – 10.1

The Committee agreed that its fourteenth session would take place in Geneva from 30 March – 1 April 2020, subject to confirmation of room availability and interpretation services.

Decision 2019 – 10.2

The Committee requested the secretariat to:

(a) Ensure that delegates are alerted by the secretariat each time a new pre-session document is posted online in compliance with Rule 3 of the Rules of Procedure, and provide a deadline for consultations among member States where appropriate;

(b) Upon request of a member State following the approval during committee sessions, place specific decisions under a silent procedure consultation among representatives of member States for a period of two weeks;

(c) Provide a list of registered participants to member States in advance of sessions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies; and

(d) Ensure that any proposals for amendments made by representatives of member States during the sessions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies are documented and reported, even if rejected.

XIII. Adoption of the report (Agenda item 11)

Decision 2019 – 11.1

The Committee adopted the report of its thirteenth session, and requested the secretariat to publish it in English, French and Russian.

Annex I

Main conclusions of the substantive segment Making a Difference – Measuring and understanding the impact of innovation policies and PPP projects on achieving the sustainable development goals (Agenda item 5)

Chairperson’s summary

Introduction

1. Innovation and Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are central means of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Under the auspices of the Committee, UNECE has developed guiding principles and standards on People-First PPPs and good practices and policy recommendations on innovation for sustainable development.

2. These good practices and principles will make a difference only if they are translated into the design, implementation, and evaluation of national innovation and PPP policies and projects in line with national sustainable development priorities. To do this, Governments need the tools to measure how current and prospective innovation policies and infrastructure projects affect their national sustainable development priorities. Making these measurement methodologies operational will create real incentives and mechanisms by which Governments and the private sector can show that they are making a difference and are contributing to the SDGs.

Are we making a difference? – Why we need to measure the sustainable development impact of innovation policies and PPP projects

3. The panellists stressed the importance of measuring the impact of PPP projects in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in light of the huge amount of investment needed to achieve the SDGs. A tool assessing the impact of PPP projects would help governments to identify and prioritize the projects that are People-first and compliant with the SDGs. Furthermore, the private sector has an increasing interest in using an industry recognized evaluation methodology to showcase the potential benefits for people and society of their projects unlike what the business as usual approach has been so far.

4. To move from promoting innovation for the sake of economic progress to promoting innovation for sustainable development, we need to complement traditional horizontal or neutral policies with policies that support directional, challenge-driven, mission-oriented and transformative innovation. The international experience with these policies is still limited, and there is as yet only limited evidence-based policy learning in this area. To remedy this, we will need new assessment methodologies and data that go beyond measuring the quantity of innovations generated, and that are capable of capturing how policies influence the direction of innovation.

Existing schemes for evaluating innovation policies and scoring PPP projects – Impacts, challenges and key lessons

5. The analyses done by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network suggest that currently no country is on track to reach all Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. This clearly shows that business as usual will not get the job done, and that we will need to develop more innovative solutions to sustainability challenges. The targets and indicators included in the Agenda to measure progress on innovation fall largely short of capturing the directionality of innovation and its possible contribution to achieving other SDGs. Most countries in the UNECE region do not yet systematically assess the impact of their innovation policies on achieving national sustainable development priorities. Methodological difficulties and a lack of data are among the main barriers.

6. There are many high-quality evaluation methodologies that are already used to score infrastructure projects. The key takeaways from the debate include the following:

- These existing tools provide very useful lessons that must be taken into account in the development of the Impact Assessment Tool for People-first PPPs.
- The institutions that have developed these tools are strongly willing to contribute to the elaboration of a specific tool applicable to all PPPs. Further discussions will be held to determine the scope of such cooperation.
- The private sector is looking for alignment and certainty around what should be the standard methodology to apply.

A better way? UNECE's work on innovation policy assessments and the People- first PPP Impact Assessment Tool

7. The key ingredients for the development of a robust People-first evaluation methodology include inter alia:

- Metrics: the metrics should be based on a set of indicators reflecting on each of the five People-first outcomes and all guiding principles based on a proper weighting mechanism.
- Validation: the design process must integrate the views of a broad range of stakeholders to ensure wide scale acceptance and adoption.
- Implementation: the tool should be applicable to all sectors, types of PPPs and countries and its effective implementation entails that it be simple, user-friendly and easily understandable.

8. The need for Governments to improve their policy evaluation has emerged in virtually all national Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews which UNECE has carried out. Policy evaluations through UNECE reviews and the Innovation Policy Outlook can provide an assessment independent of the authorities who designed and implemented the policies. As a platform for policy dialogue, the Committee can also raise awareness among national policy makers about data limitations and the need to improve the evidence base for policy learning.

From assessment to impact – How to make sure that innovation policy assessments and UNECE's PPP Impact Assessment Tool make a difference?

9. In order for innovation policy assessments to lead to policy improvements, they should provide not only evidence of outcomes, but also analysis of why outcomes were or were not achieved. As we move towards policies supporting challenge-driven, mission-oriented innovation, it will be increasingly important for successful policy learning that evaluation and continuous monitoring are embedded into the policy design from the very beginning. Existing efforts in the business community to measure performance on sustainability criteria can complement government efforts, particularly with respect to ex ante policy evaluation.

10. The UNECE's methodology will achieve impact only if it is scaled up through partnerships with key global stakeholders, such as UN bodies and MDBs. Additionally, incorporating the Human Right based approach in the methodology is not only a requirement to achieve the SDGs but will also contribute to increasing the level of adherence to the tool by the broadest range of stakeholders especially local communities.

Annex II

Intersessional implementation plan for 2019-2020

I. Introduction

1. The present document is based on the programme of work of the Committee for 2018-2019 (ECE/CECI/2017/6). It provides additional information on activities planned and proposed for the period between the thirteenth and fourteenth sessions of the Committee. To facilitate discussion, this document presents activities grouped by the main thematic areas covered by the Committee, i.e. Innovation and Competitiveness, and Public-Private Partnerships.

2. The plans and proposals reflect demand expressed by member States as well as the resources available to the secretariat at the time of writing. Delegates are invited to bring additional proposals and requests to the session.

II. Innovation and Competitiveness Policies

Events

3. The twelfth session of the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies will be held in Geneva on 5-6 December 2019. As part of the session, an international policy conference will provide an opportunity for experts from across the ECE region to exchange experiences on innovation policy. The bureau of the Team will decide on the specific topic in consultation with the Team members. The twelfth session will decide on the date for the thirteenth session to be held in 2020.

4. The 2019 session of the Working Group on Knowledge-Based Development of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) will be organized together with UNESCAP. A policy conference will be organised back-to-back with the session. The precise location and date remain to be decided.

National Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews

5. In response to a request from the Government of Georgia, a national Innovation for Sustainable Development Review will be carried out.

6. A methodological guide on Innovation for Sustainable Development Reviews will be prepared based on expert consultations within the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies.

Innovation Policy Outlook

7. A pilot sub-regional Innovation Policy Outlook will be prepared in close cooperation with participating Governments.

Innovation Policy Principles and Strategy

8. A task force convened by the Team of Specialists on Innovation and Competitiveness Policies will develop draft high-level policy principles on selected aspects of innovation for sustainable development. A broad multi-stakeholder consultation process will be initiated.

9. The SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development will be finalized for adoption by the SPECA Governing Council.

Capacity building

10. Two capacity-building workshops will be organized together with the State Committee on Science and Technology of Belarus to support the country in implementing policy recommendations from the Innovation for Sustainable Development Review of Belarus.

11. A regional training seminar on innovation policy will be organized together with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva back-to-back with the thirteenth session of the Committee.
12. A regional training seminar on selected aspects of innovation policy will be organized jointly with UNCTAD and other interested UN agencies in the framework of the Inter-Agency Task Team on Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development in the fourth quarter of 2019.
13. An event on science parks in the Russian Federation will be organized for policy makers and practitioners from CIS countries.
14. A sub-regional training on innovation policies will be organized together with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. The precise topic should be decided in consultation with the beneficiary countries, and could include development of an effective private incubator system.
15. The Team of Specialists will contribute substantively to the 2019 session of the Economic Commission for Europe.
16. Support for legislative reform in the area of innovation policies in follow-up to the innovation for sustainable development review of Kyrgyzstan.

III. Public-private Partnerships

17. The focus of the work on PPPs is on developing international PPP standards, recommendations and best practices in support of the SDGs and implementing them in countries through demand-driven national, regional, and international capacity-building activities.

Events

18. The third session of the Working Party on PPPs will be held in Geneva on 3-4 December 2019;
19. The fourth edition of the UNECE International PPP Forum will be organised in Geneva on 7-9 May 2019;
20. The second PPP dialogue for Belt and Road countries will be organised in Geneva in 2019, subject to extrabudgetary resources; and
21. Regular coordination meetings of the network of the International PPP Specialist Centres of Excellence affiliated to the UNECE International PPP Centre of Excellence will take place in 2019.

Standards, recommendations and guidelines

22. International standards on PPPs in health policy, in water and sanitation and in urban rail will be finalized during 2019;
23. Work on the model concession/PPP law will be advanced in 2019. This work is undertaken in cooperation with UNCITRAL and EBRD; and
24. The guidelines on PPPs in waste to energy projects will be finalised in 2019.

Capacity building

25. A regional PPP capacity-building workshop will be organised in Kazan, the Russian Federation in 2019;
26. A number of policy advisory and capacity building activities will be held in 2019 in CIS countries on formulating and implementing national PPP policy frameworks to promote PPPs as tools to achieve the SDGs. These activities are part of the extrabudgetary project "Strengthening the capacity of CIS countries to advance their use of PPPs to achieve the SDGs" financed by the Russian Federation. These activities will include the following:

For Belarus

(a) support for regional authorities in one of the six regions of Belarus to identify and prepare PPP projects, and a report with policy recommendations and with ideas for pilot projects;

For Tajikistan

(a) a study to review and analyse the regulatory impact on the new PPP law in Tajikistan;

(b) a workshop in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, to present this study and make policy recommendations on its implementation;

(c) a capacity building seminar in Dushanbe on strengthening PPP institutional capacity in Tajikistan.

For Kyrgyzstan

(a) an analysis with detailed guidelines and policy recommendations on the selection and initiation of PPP projects;

(b) a seminar in Bishkek on how these guidelines and PPP other best practices on the legal and regulatory framework should be adopted; and

(c) a workshop in Bishkek on how Kyrgyzstan can strengthen its PPP institutional capacity by implementing UNECE guidelines and standards, including the Guiding Principles on People-first PPPs for the UN SDGs and the standard on a Zero Tolerance approach to Corruption in PPP Procurement.

27. A capacity building initiative for countries within the Belt and Road initiative, based on three pillars of cooperation (policy dialogue, national capacity-building and transformational projects) will be implemented in 2019 subject to extrabudgetary resources.

28. Support for drafting secondary PPP legislation and prepare detailed appraisal reports on pilot PPP projects in Tajikistan subject to extra-budgetary resources.

People-first Projects

29. An evaluation methodology as an implementation tool to score infrastructure projects against the people-first PPP criteria will to be developed by a Project Team in 2019; and

30. The campaign to reach 500 people-first PPP case studies will continue to be promoted, and additional case studies will be collected and presented at the fourth UNECE International PPP Forum in Geneva on 7-9 May 2019.
