

**DECISION ADOPTED BY THE SIXTY-FOURTH SESSION OF  
THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**A (64) THE WORK OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

The Economic Commission for Europe,

*Recalling* the ECE reform adopted in December 2005, welcoming its implementation and achievements, and underlining the importance of its first five-year review that will take place in 2011-2012, with a view to drawing conclusions on the future work priorities of the ECE,

*Acknowledging* that the new ECE governance structure is an important step towards enhancing the accountability, transparency and horizontal coherence of the ECE work and promoting further progress in effective governance, results-based management and a programme of work responding to member States' priorities and needs, taking into account the economic changes in the region and in the world,

*Confirming* that ECE provides a multilateral platform for promoting Pan-European and Transatlantic economic integration and facilitating greater cooperation among its fifty-six member States, makes a useful contribution to the promotion of sustainable development and the achievement of the MDGs and general stability in the region, and is well placed to continue to address transboundary issues and contribute to building a coherent regional economic space,

*Noting* ECE's efforts to contribute through its areas of expertise to reducing disparities and existing differences in levels of economic development and environmental protection,

*Taking note, with appreciation,* of the work of the revamped Regional Coordination Mechanism which is an important tool to enhance policy coherence of the United Nations development work and strengthen cooperation with other UN entities at the regional level,

*Recognizing* that ECE has reinforced cooperation with partner organizations which, in turn, helps to increase the impact and relevance of the ECE work,

*Encouraging* the Commission to continue to share best practices beyond its region, as appropriate, and in line with the United Nations mandates, including through cooperation with its partner regional commissions and United Nations system-wide coordination mechanisms,

*Appreciating* the support of ECE to countries with economies in transition through its operational activities, including through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and One UN,

*Recognizing* the ongoing need to support economies in transition in their continuing integration into the world economy and into the existing frameworks of cooperation; and in this respect, *noting* that 90 per cent of ECE technical cooperation activities and funds have been provided to countries with economies in transition, including 18 countries eligible for Official Development Assistance, according to the OECD rules,

*Noting* the decisions taken in the intersessional period to provide trade related guidance to the UN Centre on Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business and requesting the full implementation of these decisions,

*Acknowledging* ECE's work to implement the United Nations' global mandate on gender equality by promoting the economics of gender as a factor of sustainable growth and development,

1. Reaffirms the strategic directions adopted by the 2005 ECE reform, without prejudice to the outcome of the 2011 - 2012 review of that reform, which should make use of lessons learned and best practices;
2. Welcomes the progress to date and the value of ongoing efforts to ensure better functioning and performance of the Executive Committee;
3. Reaffirms the commitment of its member States to support and strengthen the effective implementation of the organization's mandate, to ensure its continued substantive relevance and greater visibility, and to maintain and promote its relevance as a regional forum in its areas of expertise, meeting effectively the changing needs of its member States, and taking into due account the specific needs of its countries with economies in transition;
4. Encourages ECE to continue to exercise its catalytic role by bringing the sustainable development goals agreed by the international community down to the regional level and supporting their implementation;
5. Welcomes the global outreach of ECE's instruments, norms, standards and activities for the benefit of other countries and regions that underlines the importance of further improving and streamlining the already close cooperation and relations between ECE and other partners in the region;
6. Requests ECE to continue its contribution to UN system-wide coherence at the national, regional and global levels, as requested in General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the Triennial Comprehensive Review of Operational Development of the UN system and General Assembly resolution 62/277 on UN system-wide coherence;
7. Requests the Executive Committee to duly consider the outputs, as appropriate, of the discussion at the sixty-fourth session of the Commission when it reviews the work programmes of the ECE Sectoral Committees during the intersessional period, and similarly requests the respective Sectoral Committees of the ECE to duly consider the said outputs, as appropriate;

### **Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Conference on Sustainable Development**

8. Decides to organize the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the UNCSD on 1–2 December 2011 in Geneva, based on the decision by the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly that in 2011 the regional implementation meetings will become regional preparatory meetings for UNCSD (A/RES/64/236);
9. Invites member States to explore the possibilities of making an extrabudgetary contribution to help defray the costs of the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the UNCSD;

### **Ministerial Conference on Ageing**

10. Recognizes the central role of the UNECE Working Group on Ageing in coordinating the regional element of the second cycle of review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its regional implementation strategy (MIPAA/RIS) in 2011-2013;

11. Decides to organize the UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing on 19-20 September 2012 as a concluding regional event of the second cycle of review and appraisal of the implementation of MIPAA/RIS and expresses its gratitude to the Government of Austria for the willingness to host the meeting;

### **Frequency of the Commission Session**

12. Taking into consideration the fact that the Executive Committee is empowered to act, in conformity with its Terms of Reference, on behalf of the Commission in between the biennial sessions of the latter and expressing its satisfaction with the performance of the Executive Committee in this capacity, decides that the next session of the Commission will be held in 2013 and defers its final decision on the frequency of the session;

### **Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia**

13. Welcomes further progress in the SPECA programme and its role in promoting regional economic cooperation and facilitating peace and stability in Central Asia, as well as the strengthening of its cooperation with Afghanistan through participation in the High-level Core Group of the Regional Economic Cooperation Council on Afghanistan (RECCA);

### **Aid-for-Trade**

14. Further requests that work be undertaken, in cooperation with the WTO and other organizations, to encourage and ensure the full participation of all countries with economies in transition in the WTO Aid-for-Trade Initiative;

15. Notes the results of the SPECA Aid-for-Trade Roadmap Ministerial Conference and requests the secretariat to work with the WTO and other organizations to support the follow-up to this Conference and ensure the continued participation and involvement of SPECA countries in the WTO Aid-for-Trade initiative;

### **Innovation and Competitiveness**

16. Supports the undertaking of Innovation Performance Reviews within the mandate of the Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration;

### **Road safety**

17. Recognizes the importance of General Assembly resolution 64/255 on Improving global road safety and its implementation and takes note of the launching of the Decade of Action for Road Safety and of the ECE initiatives to scale up road safety activities;

18. Supports ECE in its efforts to improve coordination with other UN and non-UN international actors in the sectors impacting road safety and search for additional resources for the work on road safety and calls upon the international donor community to provide additional funding in support of road safety action programmes at ECE;

### **Transport**

19. Takes note of the successful work done by the World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations

20. Takes note of the conclusions contained in the White Paper on Sustainable and Efficient Inland water transport in Europe and requests the secretariat, in close cooperation with the main stakeholders, to assist member States in the implementation of the White Paper's policy recommendations, as well as to assume new specific tasks in support of the IWT development, subject to the availability of extra-budgetary funding;

21. Takes note of the Paper on "Transport for sustainable development in the UNECE region" that highlights country best practices, as well as the main challenges in improving economic, social and environmental sustainability of transport infrastructure and services;

22. Welcomes the global project on CO2 reduction in inland transport (For Future Inland Transport Project – ForFITs) and invites all member states to actively participate in its implementation;

23. Takes note of transport infrastructure development in Europe and Central Asia, as well as of the progress of the Trans-European Motorways, Trans-European Railways and the Euro-Asian transport linkages projects and invites the secretariat to continue its support to these country initiatives, and consolidate its relations with other organizations concerned;

24. Requests the Executive Committee to ensure the unimpeded functioning of the TIR convention and to ensure that the full budget of the mandated agency is externally audited in accordance with generally accepted international standards.

### **Sustainable forest management and the International Year of Forests**

25. Reiterates its commitment and support to the work on forests and timber undertaken by ECE and welcomes the proposed activities for the International Year of Forests;

26. Also reiterates the need to avoid duplication of efforts and activities and to develop and strengthen synergies at the pan-European level on work on forests, building upon the already excellent cooperation with FAO where there is a joint ECE/FAO programme of work and joint secretariat arrangements to support this programme;

27. In this regard, requests the secretariat to continue to offer the expertise and services of the ECE/FAO Joint Section in support of Pan-European forest activities, including the Forest Europe process as well as other relevant processes at the global level (e.g. the United Nations Forum on Forests);

## **Housing challenges in the region**

28. Invites the Committee on Housing and Land Management, after its annual session in October 2011, to report to the Executive Committee, first on the possibility of holding a Ministerial meeting in 2012 to assess progress in the implementation of ECE housing instruments and to define future policy directions for the Committee's work, and second on the outcome of the work of the relevant open-ended Working Group on the pros and cons of a possible legally binding instrument on housing;

29. Encourages the Committee on Housing and Land Management to consider land administration and "real estate markets" as a key components of its work;

## **Seventh "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference and the Environment and Health Process**

30. Recognizes the significant role of the "Environment for Europe" process in advancing environmental governance across the region, and expresses its appreciation to the Government of Kazakhstan for hosting the Seventh "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference; acknowledges the importance for the region of the two Conference themes, i.e. sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems, and greening the economy: mainstreaming environment into economic development; and expects that Conference outcomes will serve as an important contribution to the regional input into the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 (Rio + 20);

31. Welcomes the cooperation of UNECE and the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe in implementing the Parma Ministerial Declaration, including the creation of the European Environment and Health Ministerial Board and the Environment and Health Task Force. In this context, recognizes the importance of joint activities and promotion of synergies in addressing environment and health related issues through advancing the implementation of the Protocol on Water and Health, the Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme, the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment, the Joint Task Force on Health Aspects of Air Pollution; and through the Environmental Performance Review Programme;

32. Recognizes the value of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) hosted by UNECE including important instruments on water, air, environmental impact assessment, industrial accidents, and public participation and access to information and justice in environmental matters.

## **Statistics**

33. Emphasizes the importance of good quality statistical data as a basis for formulation of adequate and evidence-based policies to address the growing concern about sustainable development and environment-related quality of life, and requests the Conference of European Statisticians to develop recommendations and agree, after taking into account existing statistics at regional, subregional and national levels, on a common framework for measuring sustainable development within the realm of official statistics;

34. Supports the work with national environmental experts and official statisticians on addressing methodological discrepancies, data gaps and lack of clear guidance related to the

production of environmental indicators in key areas such as clean air, energy, drinking water, waste, forest biodiversity, and sustainable transport;

35. Recognizes the need for robust, timely and comparable statistics on environmental indicators e.g. on climate change, and for strengthening the capacity of the National Statistical Offices in producing statistics on environmental indicators;

### **Energy**

36. Encourages ECE to continue to work for regional dialogue, integration and cooperation through safe norms and standards for production, transformation, transit and transport, and uses of energy that contribute to secure, affordable, and sustainable economic development;

37. Takes particular note of its work on energy efficiency and renewable energy and encourages its continuous active engagement at the global level with other UN agencies, including the other regional commissions and UN Energy, on the range of energy topics, including national natural resources;

38. Endorses the “Best Practice Guidance for Effective Methane Drainage and Use in Coal Mines” and decides to propose to ECOSOC that it recommend its application to all countries worldwide;

### **Executive Committee**

39. Invites the Executive Committee to consider how to better interact with the Chairpersons of ECE Sectoral Committees with the aim of ensuring its role in terms of governance and oversight in the intersessional period;

40. Invites the Executive Committee to decide on the modalities of the upcoming review which it will carry out with a view to proposing decisions on the matter to be taken by the next ECE session.

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