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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY HIGHLIGHTS 2011 PRIORITIES AT TOWN HALL MEETING

Ján Kubiš, UNECE Executive Secretary, presented the priorities of the Commission for 2011 at a Town Hall meeting held on 19 January. In his address, he recalled the priorities of the United Nations for the year, as presented by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly.

As regards UNECE, he stated that the Commission session, to be held from 29-31 March 2011, constitutes a key occasion of dialogue between member States and the secretariat. The Commission session's high-level segment will cover two main themes: "Economic integration in the UNECE region" and "The role of regional integration and cooperation for promoting sustainable development in the UNECE region". The second theme will focus on transport and trade infrastructure, and energy cooperation. There will also be a round table on "Empowering women for sustainable development in the UNECE region".



In addition, the Executive Secretary mentioned the following items, among others:

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INLAND TRANSPORT SECURITY DISCUSSION FORUM GENEVA, 31 JANUARY

UNECE's 2011 Inland Transport Security Discussion Forum will be held on 31 January 2011 under the theme "Transport operators, cargo and conveyance security: taking stock of regulations and moving ahead". Government officials, industry leaders and law enforcement agencies, will discuss how to enhance inland transport security, develop security standards and reduce the effects of cargo crime and terrorist threats.

During the last decade, transport systems have been used in many terrorist attacks across the world - in Bali, Istanbul, Glasgow, London, Madrid, Moscow and New York City, to name just a few examples - either as the means of the attack, as a target, or both.

Vehicle theft (and subsequent use as a car-bomb), theft of dangerous substances during transport, illegal border crossing of persons and goods, threats to critical transport infrastructure such as tunnels and bridges are examples of the many types of security risks that transport faces.

Transport infrastructures are vulnerable for many reasons. First, many transport systems were not designed to cope

■ The Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference, which will be held in Astana, Kazakhstan, from 21-23 September 2011. The Conference will address two issues of high relevance to our region: sustainable management of water and water-related ecosystems; and greening the economy: mainstreaming the environment into economic development.

■ The Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20), to be held in December at Palais des Nations. Sustainable development is an overarching principle to which almost all UNECE activities contribute, directly or indirectly.

■ Further reinforcing UNECE's role as a platform for cooperation among member States.

■ The celebrations of the International Year of Forests, orchestrated by the joint UNECE/FAO Forestry & Timber Section.

■ GA Resolution 63/250 approved the overall HR Reform to streamline contractual arrangements and harmonize the conditions of service: one UN for all staff. This translated into one set of UN rules with three types of appointment only (namely: fixed term, temporary and continuing, as opposed to the previous 11).

The Executive Secretary drew the attention of staff to the availability in Geneva of the service of the ombudsman for resolving workplace-related concerns.

He concluded by thanking staff for their commitment and enthusiasm, and stressed that efforts to maximize efficiency would be all the more crucial in the current period of resource constraints. □



with security threats. Historically, transport authorities have focused on the development of transport networks, which

facilitate the smooth flow of passengers and goods while meeting standards of safety - not of security. Secondly, inland transport means and infrastructure are widely accessible. Road vehicles are everywhere. Infrastructure such as roads, rail lines and inland waterways, including bridges and tunnels, are freely accessible, frequently without surveillance. Thirdly, transport is complex. Each mode of transport has specific infrastructure, vehicles, terminals and regulatory requirements. All modes carry passengers and goods. In addition, thousands of non-transport companies interact with the transport sector. The interfaces between the various modes and companies are an additional difficulty. The international aspects of transport add to this inherent complexity since national rules, regulations and practices typically differ from one country to another.

Transport stakeholders should therefore work towards reducing, or eliminating these threats. The "transport

community" should address these threats preventively, acting at a sufficiently early stage with the full range of existing and, when necessary, new measures. Any new measures, however, should be proportionate to the threat and be as efficient as possible, so that they do not lead to excessive obstacles to the international movements of people and goods. This approach requires a close co-operation of transport authorities with other authorities such as intelligence, security, customs and border services.

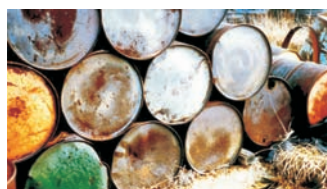
For more information about the Forum, please visit:
http://www.unece.org/trans/events/2011/inlandsecurity_forum11.html.

FIRST MEETING OF THE COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE OF THE PRTR PROTOCOL GENEVA, 27-28 JANUARY

The Compliance Committee of the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTR Protocol) to the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) will meet for the first time on 27-28 January 2011 at Palais des Nations.

The Compliance Committee was established by the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties (20-22 April 2010) as a non-judicial, non-adversarial and consultative body. Its mission is to assess and promote compliance of the Parties with the provisions of the Protocol and to address cases of

To this end, UNECE launched its Inland Transport Security Discussion Forum in 2010. The Forum serves as a platform for discussion and exchange of information among governments, international organizations, academia and the private sector. This year's Forum is organized in partnership with the Transported Asset Protection Association (TAPA). TAPA members consist of hundreds of companies, many of which are the world's leading consumer brands producers, logistics and transport providers and insurers. □



non-compliance. The nine members of the Compliance Committee, who will serve in their personal capacity to further this mission, were elected by the Meeting of the Parties.

At its first meeting, the Compliance Committee is expected to elect its officers and develop its methods of work, in order to be ready for considering possible communications from the public, submissions by Parties and referrals by the secretariat. The Committee will also discuss how to promote its mission among Parties and stakeholders as to publicize the compliance mechanism widely. □

For more information, please visit: <http://www.unece.org/env/pp/prtr-cc.htm>
or contact the secretariat at: public.participation@unece.org.

UNECE AND THE PHILIPPINES DISCUSS PPP FOR HEALTH

On 10 January 2011, Geoffrey Hamilton, chief of section and coordinator on Public-Private Partnerships (PPP), was in Manila to meet representatives of the Government of the Philippines to discuss how the UNECE's proposed international Centre of Excellence on PPP could assist the country in implementing its PPP strategy in the health sector. Geoffrey Hamilton met with His Excellency Mr. Cesar Purisima, Minister of Finance, His Excellency Dr. Enrique Ona, Minister of Health, Mr. Philamer Torion, Executive Director of the PPP Center, as well as with other Government officials.

UNECE's intergovernmental Team of Specialists on PPPs (the only body of this kind amongst the United Nations regional commissions) counts non-UNECE member countries such as Japan, the Republic of Korea and Indonesia. Over the years, UNECE has attracted to its hub many experts from around the world and most recently Mr. Celso Manangan, Director of



the PPP centre in Manila, worked for several months with UNECE's PPP programme.

The new Government of H.E. President Benigno S. Aquino has given PPP a very strong priority. The country has one of the oldest PPP programmes, stretching back to the early 1990s. Before joining the Government as Minister of Health, Dr. Ona had been Executive Director of the country's national kidney and dialysis Center in Manila. In this capacity, he initiated the first PPP - a technology lease contract - for the introduction of the latest dialysis technology to aid those suffering from kidney failure. Now, Dr. Ona wishes to extend PPP to other levels of care in the health sector including to hospitals and to rural areas, which are poorly served by health professionals. Dr. Ona sees PPP as key tool to allow his country to offer the level of care that its population requires. During the meeting, the Philippines Government confirmed their interest in hosting a specialized Centre on PPP in health. Such a centre would be responsible for identifying and maintaining "best practice in PPP with detailed case studies on projects that have worked and project that have not been so successful" and providing support to other countries, especially those getting started in PPP. Under the UNECE initiative on an international Centre of Excellence on PPP, which originates in the longstanding PPP capacity building programme between UNESCAP, UNECE and UNECA, different countries will be responsible for different PPP sectors. Countries like the Philippines can at the same time learn and benefit from UNECE's extensive expertise and network, while providing useful information on its own experience in PPPs in health to UNECE countries, especially those with economies in transition. □

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