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Technical Assistance to countries with transition economies

A decade of Technical Assistance in the field of Transport 2002-2012

Note by the secretariat

1. Technical assistance to UN Member countries is a crucial tool for implementing the UNECE programme of work and, as underscored by the 2005 Work Plan on ECE Reform, forms an integral part of the Commission's activities. The assistance is based on the following main principles: it should be

- demand driven,
- results oriented,
- focused on the countries with economies in transition, and
- linked to UNECE's normative work.

2. UNECE technical assistance services in transport therefore aim at improving the national capacity of these countries to implement the UN legal instruments, norms and standards administered by the UNECE Transport Division. They have a strong regional/sub-regional dimension and promote trans-boundary solutions to shared problems. Another important goal is to support the UNECE member States with transition/emerging market economies in their efforts towards the achievement of internationally agreed development goals.

3. While implementing its programme of work, the UNECE employs the following main types of technical cooperation services:

- Advisory services and capacity-building workshops, seminars, study tours, and training courses;
- Technical cooperation projects, including those with multi-sectoral and/or sub-regional focus, in areas where the UNECE has a mandate and expertise.

4. Technical assistance and capacity building activities of the Transport Division are funded by different sources. The Regional Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC-Chapter 22) includes Regional Advisory work and the UN Development Account projects. The regular budget of the Division (Chapter 19-2) is also used to cover capacity building events and technical assistance activities. As the UNECE legal instruments in transport are more and more global, there is a growing demand to provide technical cooperation, consultations and capacity building activities on transport matters also outside the ECE region. These technical activities at global level are in general funded by various stakeholders. Infrastructure projects, whether Euro-Asian Transport Linkages (EATL) or Trans European Motorways (TEM) and Trans European Railways (TER) projects have their own specific financing mechanisms. All these activities nevertheless follow the same principles.

5. The UN Development Account (UNDA) provided funding for the execution of several global and inter-continental capacity building projects:

- The global transport project connecting continents and regions, 2003 – 2007 - UNDA 2nd tranche - ; and its special program that resulted in the EATL project (first phase), which has been followed up thanks to financial support by the Russian Federation and in-kind support by OSCE, ECO and many others;
- The global project on setting road safety targets, 2007 - 2009– led by UNECE; UNDA 5th tranche;
- The global project, called For Future Inland Transport Systems (ForFITS), 2011-13 - to mitigate climate change for Future Inland Transport Systems which aims at developing an information and analysis tool based on a uniform methodology for the evaluation of the emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the inland transport sector (road, rail and inland waterways - led by UNECE; UNDA 7th tranche –
- The new, just about to start global project for facilitating transit and border crossing for goods transport through customs to customs information exchange, 2012-2014 – also lead by ECE.UNDA 8th tranche.

I. Activities performed

6. About 600 missions have been carried out by the Division of Transport over 2002-2011. They relate directly to the programme of work of the Transport Division and may be analysed according to the grouping of activities into 15 clusters, matching the one used by the Committee for the biennial evaluation of the Division performance. This history of technical assistance work offers a lot of good lessons. . In addition to the Regional Adviser's activities, Technical Assistance is also conducted by the Transport Division's regular staff as integral part of their regular work, taking into account their respective competences, providing advisory services, conducting advisory missions to member countries and organizing and participating in national, regional and sub-regional events.

7. In the course of the past ten years the activities of the Regional Adviser on Transport were first concentrated on providing advisory services to transition economies under the SPECA project on Development of Transport Infrastructure and Border-Crossing Facilitation; the Trans-European North-South Motorway (TEM) and the Trans-European Railway (TER) projects and the elaboration of their Master Plan; the first UNDA project on Capacity Building in Developing Interregional Land and Land-Cum-Sea Transport Linkages; and other projects related to the development of Pan-European transport corridors and Euro-Asian transport links.

8. Whilst pursuing the efforts of the whole Division towards support to countries to accede to the UN legal instruments on transport administered by UNECE, a lot of emphasis was given to the accession to and implementation of the 4 key infrastructure agreements leading to enhanced harmonization of the technical requirements in construction and traffic conditions throughout the UNECE Region, thus creating the basis of seamless transport. .

9. Outstanding emphasis was given to the regional and sub-regional cooperation for enhancing national capacity for the development of *transport infrastructure* and this way promoting the pan-European and Euro-Asian economic integration. Development of the Euro-Asian transport links is promoted in cooperation with ESCAP and member Governments, while strengthening of transport links between Europe and Africa, and Europe and Middle East, as well as across the Mediterranean, is promoted in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. Transport and trade facilitation work focuses on transit and border-crossing facilitation. In particular, it is mainstreamed, inter alia, through the implementation of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods and the TIR Convention. The special needs of landlocked transition economies and their transit neighbours are serviced through technical assistance and analytical work, in particular under the Special Programme for Economies in Central Asia (SPECA) and the implementation of the Almaty Plan of Action (APA).

10. UNECE member governments include nine “landlocked developing countries” as classified by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (*LDCs*). They are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Six of them are Member countries in the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA).

11. LDCs in the UNECE region continue to face numerous challenges to decrease their economic distance to markets and improve their competitiveness. Many UN legal instruments, standards, norms and recommendations which, if promoted, used and properly implemented, can assist landlocked and transit countries in overcoming their special disadvantages. However, UNECE does not only offer a large pool of legal instruments and recommendations, but it is deeply involved in capacity building activities tailored more to the needs and reflecting the significance of APA, e.g. by undertaking a number of APA-related initiatives.

12. The *SPECA PWG-TBC* is one of the key elements to generate capacity building activities in Central Asia. It focuses on developing new, and extending existing, road and rail networks in the region, as well as preparing for the Mid-Term Review (2008) of the Almaty declaration of Land-Locked and Transit Developing Countries. To some extent SPECA PWG-TBC may be considered as a privileged tool to focus attention of Central Asian countries on topics of concern for the whole region, not only on infrastructure projects and border crossing facilitation but also on particular subjects such as road safety, dangerous goods transport, or transport statistics (Cf. Annex I).

13. Technical cooperation with *Mediterranean countries* has been promoted under the EU EUROMED Project through the introduction of the major UNECE legal instruments in the field of road transport in the framework of the EUROMED Training Seminar on International Road Haulage in the EuroMed region (Istanbul, December 2005). Recent contacts with EC experts engaged with the implementation of EUROMED Road, Rail, Urban Transport (RRUT) EU project opened new opportunities for closer interaction of the EC and UNECE Transport Division in the Mediterranean region.

14. Assistance was provided with EU funding to experts from the Central Asian and Caucasus countries to facilitate their participation in the meetings of the Inland Transport Committee and selected subsidiary bodies. Advisory services were provided also through the BSEC working Group on Transport as well as the OSCE Economic Forum; the EU EUROMED project.

15. TA activities performed in 2010-2011 took into account the new demand , i.e. :

- road safety, in the framework of the UNDA 5th tranche programme and the Decade of Action for Road Safety;
- environment protection, in the framework of the UNDA 7th tranche programme;
- ITS applications in the field of transport to become more efficient, safer and greener.

16. **Road traffic safety** deserved particular attention. It has become a major global social, economic, development and health concern. A number of capacity-building activities were implemented under the UNDA funded project “Improving global road safety: setting regional and national road traffic casualty reduction targets”, which was carried out by the UNECE in cooperation with the other UN Regional Commissions. Two sets of best practices in the area of road safety were published in 2009. UNECE supported the preparation and organization of the First Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety that was organized by the Russian Federation in 2009. A detailed UNECE program of technical assistance in road traffic safety was developed to implement the UN Decade of action for road safety in the period of 2011-2020. Now the implementation is to start as funding is secured.

17. **Intelligent Transport Systems** play an important role in shaping the future ways of mobility and the transport sector. Through the use of ITS applications, transport will become more efficient, safer and greener. The huge potentials and benefits however can only be reaped if ITS solutions are put in place in an internationally harmonized way. ITS is under-utilized and already today we witness the development of different standards around the world and its regions as well as the appearance of diverse liability problems. The core objective of the UNECE strategy on ITS is to lobby for new actions and policies where ITS improve the quality of life and make sustainable mobility available across borders. 20 UNECE actions were agreed on to promote the use of ITS as illustrated in the UNECE road map on Intelligent Transport Systems.

18. All types of technical assistance services have been used by the Division: advisory services, consultations, conferences, technical assistance through national or regional workshops. Advisory services provided by the Subprogramme contributed for instance to improve the capacity of beneficiary countries to effectively apply the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and labelling of chemicals (GHS), as well as to implement rules and regulations that govern the transport and **handling of dangerous goods**.

19. The demand for technical cooperation, consultations and capacity building activities on transport matters outside the ECE region is increasing with the global nature of the legal instruments managed in the Division. A conference on dangerous goods transport held in Cairo in October 2011 for the League of Arab States, as well as a regional seminar in Colombia proved the global interest for some of our regulations governing the transport and handling of dangerous goods. The high and fast development of vehicle technologies together with new car manufacturing centres in Asia and Latin America are leading the way for countries in these regions to adhere to vehicle regulations. Workshops and meetings were held in Brazil, Columbia, Indonesia and Philippines in 2011 to sensitize these countries to the 1958 Agreement concerning the Adoption of Uniform Technical Prescriptions for Wheeled Vehicles, Equipment and Parts which can be fitted and /or be used on Wheeled Vehicles and the Conditions for Reciprocal Recognition of Approvals Granted on the Basis of these Prescriptions.

20. The UNECE Transport Division works in close *cooperation* with the other four regional commissions of the United Nations, namely the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC), the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA). Cooperation with UNESCAP is especially emphasized through the SPECA PWG TBC and because of the physical connections of the Euro-Asian landmass.

21. In providing its technical cooperation services in the area of transport, the UNECE also closely cooperated with other relevant organizations, such as EU, OSCE, UNDP, UNESCAP, TRACECA and ECO. Examples of such cooperation include, EU-UNECE cooperation in facilitating the participation of Central Asia and Caucasus countries in the work of the ITC and its subsidiary bodies; UNECE-UNDP provision of practical guidance to the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina on the preparation of the national law on the carriage of dangerous goods; capacity-building training for customs and transport experts of ECO member States on the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, in cooperation with Iran's Customs Agency; cooperation between UNECE and TRACECA for further improvement of the infrastructure network in Central Asia.

22. In the process of planning and delivery of its technical cooperation services, the UNECE Transport Division maintains active collaboration with key international organizations and institutions present in the region, both within and outside the UN system, with the aim to increase the effectiveness of its technical assistance and avoid duplication of resources. Special attention was given to the implementation of the Memoranda of Understanding with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization (BSEC) and the contribution of the UNECE, in its areas of expertise, to the EU neighbourhood policy of the European Commission (Cf. Annex 2). Partnerships with other organisations and institutions, including the business and academic communities and non-governmental organizations helped maximize synergies, ensured coordination and proper division of labour.

II. Lessons learned

- Technical assistance and capacity building activities cover almost all the clusters of the Division;
- Most of the senior staff of the Division participated in these activities;
- Cooperation with the other UN regional Commissions is necessary to speak with one voice on transport matters, as well as to facilitate the use of the UN transport conventions across the globe;
- Cooperation with other transport stakeholders, either governmental or non-governmental organizations, is also needed, as they bring valuable perspectives and solutions to transport issues;
- Among the topics which were less or not addressed in the past ten years are intermodal transport, transport of perishable foodstuffs and inland water transport.

A. TEM and TER Projects' challenges

23. The elaboration of the TEM and TER Master Plan and its revision targeting to cover 21 countries of the region assisted towards the assurance of the TEM and TER Networks' continuity.

24. The attainment of TEM and TER Projects' objectives was challenged basically due to the weak financial position of most TEM and TER member countries that, by a great majority, are countries with economies in transition. Therefore, most of them could not carry out the necessary transport infrastructure investments that would accelerate the attainment of the projects' objectives and would eliminate the existing transport infrastructure gaps.

25. Furthermore, since the UNECE is not in a position to co-fund the Projects' monitoring system for the elaboration of necessary feasibility studies, technical and economic research and pilot project implementations, thus leaving the Project Central Offices with limited financial resources coming only from the fixed annual contributions of their members to the Trust Funds, the Projects are still facing great difficulties in offering their members the further technical assistance they need.

26. The possibility of connecting the Projects' plans with EU programmes that may finance activities of common interest was successfully used in the past and could be further promoted by the UNECE Transport Division in cooperation with EU. In this regard, the accession to the EU of several TEM and TER member countries in the period under review resulted in a progressive release of EU Cohesion and Structural Funds of significant importance to these countries, assisting them in accelerating the implementation of their priority transport infrastructure plans foreseen by the TEM and TER Projects and therefore contributed to their achievement.

27. However, the lack of willingness of TEM and TER member countries to assign and fund the costs of international staff to the projects, particularly a Project Manager, may be considered as a threat to the smooth continuation of TEM and TER activities.

B. Inadequate Funding

28. Supporting accession to and implementation of the UN legal instruments in transport administered by UNECE is a major function of the work of the Transport Regional Adviser. Accession to legal instruments requires direct and frequent contacts with countries in transition in order to advise the countries concerned on priority instruments. Such contacts require financing for missions to countries in transition. Lack of funding can result in reduced missions/activities with detrimental effects for accession to legal instruments. The UNECE should ensure that such funding continues to be adequate.

29. Implementation of legal instruments requires focused attention on institutional capacity building (training through workshops, seminars and advisory missions) in the countries concerned. The joint project on Capacity Building in Developing Interregional Land and Land-cum-Sea Transport Linkages that was implemented in the period 2003 – 2007 and its major component, the UNECE/UNESCAP joint Euro/Asian Transport Linkages plan, gave some solutions in the field of assisting capacity building, by the organization of workshops and provision of advisory services; preparation of country reports, at least for the project beneficiary countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan. The EATL Phase II built on the early results and achieved even more: updated EATL Investment Plan, Review of non-Physical obstacles, comparison of land and maritime routes, the development of the GIS database and maps for the EATL routes, SWOT analysis of the EATL routes and last, but not least regular and

effective collaboration among the interested countries along the routes between Europe and Asia. The EATL cooperation could now move towards more concrete and tangible results in promoting that investment plans get implemented, as well as that facilitation measures introduced and kept in force, provided there is adequate funding available. This history of EATL shows the importance of building blocks and the follow up to technical assistance projects. Unfortunately, the UNDA system is not in favour of continued or repeated projects, however useful it may be for sustainable results.

30. So far, extra budgetary funding had been ensured for the elaboration of the TEM Master Plan (TEM Trust Fund and IRU funds). Extra-budgetary funds were also raised for the facilitation of participation of Central Asian and Caucasus countries to the meetings of ITC and selected subsidiary bodies (co-funded by EU, in 2004-2006). Russian Funding of the continuation of the Euro-Asian transport links project in Phase II provided practical solutions for the substantive progress and results in the course of 2008-2012. Lately, the Government of Kazakhstan granted 20,000 US dollars in 2010 and 2011 to develop SPECA activities in the field of transport in 2011 and 2012.

31. Secondment programmes have also been developed. For instance, in the most recent period, the Government of Germany sponsored the post of an Associate Expert in ITS. It offered the opportunity for further in-depth studies related to ITS and vehicle regulations, and facilitated the preparation of the ITC policy segment of 2012 on Transport and ITS. A Spanish University and Spanish technical services also contributed by providing two trainees to work on technical regulations of vehicles.

C. Deficiencies in human resources in Government institutions

32. An essential ingredient to effective policy development, implementation and delivery of Government policies is the presence of well-trained and motivated staff. However, there are indications that a number of Governments in transition economies do not adequately promote the sustainability of human resources in their respective institutions, thus compromising their effectiveness.

33. In a number of countries, high staff turnover in Government institutions results in lack of continuity and loss of institutional knowledge. This is counterproductive to capacity building efforts. This may seriously compromise the ability of Governments to effectively implement policies and may result in adverse effects for economic development, international trade and integration into the world economies and markets.

34. Furthermore, effective development and delivery of Government policies and services require well-motivated and dedicated staff. However, lack of job stability and security, as well as lack of adequate remuneration, may often lead to job dissatisfaction, inattention and disinterest on the part of staff in serving effectively their respective institutions and their peoples.

35. Another problem can be a situation whereby Government staff, having received training or participated in Conferences and meetings, fail to transfer the information, knowledge and expertise gained to other officials with functions in the areas concerned. Lack of adequate transfer of knowledge and follow-up can be detrimental to the effective implementation of national objectives and policies.

36. Concerted efforts are required by Governments to address the effective implementation of human resource policies by their respective institutions in order to ensure sustainable economic development.

III. Strategic Direction for the future

A. Activities to be performed in 2012-2013

37. At the start of the biennium 2012-2013, quite a number of missions have already been planned. They coincide with the mandates given by UNECE Member countries, either at the Inland Transport Committee level or even at upper levels of the United Nations.

38. Whilst technical cooperation activities in the area of transport are first of all required to strengthen the capacity of countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia, in particular landlocked countries, to implement relevant UN legal instruments, norms and standards in transport. In addition as a response to increased demand by Member states instead of trying to address all the tasks in each biennium with the same emphasis, comprehensiveness and depths, the UNECE Transport sub-programme selectively identified strategic areas that deserve special attention (see Programme of Work of UNECE Transport Subprogram for 2012-2013 [ECE/TRANS/2012/9]). The four issues of strategic importance in the current biennium are:

- Road traffic safety
- Sustainable transport development
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Intelligent Transport Systems

39. Therefore, capacity building activities and technical assistance is also correlated with it and should contribute to their implementation.

40. In this regard, one of the biggest technical assistance projects is the ForFITS project – funded from the 7th tranche of UNDA. It is under implementation. The main objective of this project is to enhance international cooperation and planning towards sustainable transport policies. Its achievement is expected to result from capacity building initiatives organized for policy makers and training activities for technical experts, leveraging on the development of a modelling tool capable to assist users in the selection of the most appropriate and effective measures to reduce CO₂ emissions in the inland transport sector (including road, rail and waterways except national and international aviation and maritime transport: CO₂ emissions caused by international aviation and maritime transport are excluded from its scope). Since this modelling tool is meant to foster sustainable transport policies For Future Inland Transport Systems, it is named ForFITS. As soon as the ForFITS model has been developed that capacity building part of the project will come into the forefront.

41. The climate change adaptation project carried out under the auspices of WP.5 and carried out by an Expert Group has so far the following achievements: In 2013 a major report will be published under the title “Climate change impacts and adaptation on International Transport Networks.

42. Technical Assistance also refers to the TEM and TER infrastructure projects and SPECA PWG-TBC activities, which constitute more or less a permanent area of capacity building activities carried out by the Division, comforted by the support provided over years by their Member countries at the Inland Transport Committee.

43. The phase II of the EATL project is under completion. The inter-country cooperation under the EATL Project promoted by the UNECE encouraged cooperation among 27 countries along the Euro-Asian land bridge for the coordinated development of Euro-Asian inland transport links. The project has so far produced country-demanded, tangible results and proposals for the development and operation of safe, secure and efficient Euro-Asian

transport solutions addressing both physical and non-physical obstacles to transport. Results include an investment plan for transport infrastructure projects along the main Euro-Asian routes. In addition it includes an analysis of non-physical obstacles to transport, a comparison of rail and maritime routes between Europe and Asia, a GIS data base and related applications, as well as policy recommendations. The second EATL Ministerial Meeting is planned on 26 February 2013 in Geneva.

44. The diversity of actions undertaken by the various sections and the regional adviser show the complex interaction between the permanent objective of capacity building activities aimed at the accession and implementation of the relevant UNECE legal instruments, norms and standards by countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, South Caucasus and Central Asia, in particular landlocked countries, and the actual concerns of the transport community, where all stakeholders are facing new challenges due to globalization, new technologies, externalities such as environment, safety and security.

B. New efforts

45. **Transport of Perishable foodstuff:** Bearing in mind the development of equipment certification centres for the transportation of perishable goods in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in the framework of ATP Agreement and under the European Union's TRACECA Programme for Central Asia, it is highly advisable that Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan become contracting parties of the ATP Agreement as soon as possible.

46. **In the UNDA 8th tranche** the global project called "Strengthening the capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to facilitate legitimate border crossing, regional cooperation and integration" was approved. The objective of the project is to further facilitate legitimate trade and transport from and to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in particular landlocked countries, through an extended use of international standards and making use of the latest information and communication technologies to increase cooperation between Customs authorities and C2C electronic information exchange, while further securing the collections of duties and taxes by Customs. UNECE is the lead implementing agency in cooperation with the other regional commissions.

47. **Transport of dangerous goods:** Most of the legal instruments in this field are of global nature and almost all UNECE Member countries are parties. However there is still a gap between being part of an international Convention or agreement and implementing them effectively. The SPECA PWG-TBC raised awareness of SPECA countries on this matter at its 2011 session. The topic will be fully discussed at the 2012 session. Technical assistance might be needed upon request of some SPECA countries.

48. **Statistics:** Collecting transport statistics from Central Asian Countries is difficult. On the basis of the requests done in various fora (WP6, ITC in 2009 -2010), two seminar/workshops in Caucasus and Central Asia were held in 2010-2011 to raise the awareness of those countries on the need for gathering data on transport and on the use of the Common Questionnaire with special focus on methodology and road accidents statistics. Information on the E-Censuses was also included in the agenda. However national Authorities in charge still fail to contribute to a coherent and comprehensive data system on transport statistics. A document on Transport Statistics as a tool for economic development assessment was prepared with a special focus on CIS countries, Caucasus and Central Asia. The conclusions of this analytical work in support of the technical assistance already provided will need to be finalized once the workshop in Ukraine organized. After this the paper will be published.

49. To conclude, technical assistance is seldom spontaneous. Seminars, workshops, Conferences or field visits deserve careful preparation and financial coverage, which cannot be quickly achieved. As these activities are demand-driven, they also require from the demanding partner many consultations and preparatory work before being set-up. Once again lack of continuity in policies developed and professionals involved may be counterproductive to capacity building efforts. To promote pan-European integration, UNECE provides a forum for policy dialogue. Acceding to and implementing UN legal instruments, norms and standards, transferring know-how and sharing best practices as well as implementing global commitments in transport have been a motto for the past decade and should remain in future.

Annex 1

SPECA PWG-TBC

Session	Date - Place	Main topics	Outcomes
7th meeting	25-27 November 2002 in Almaty-Kazakhstan	Investment projects which were of regional significance; transit transport problems, as well as facilitation of international transport	MoU on Facilitation of International Road Transport of Goods in the framework of SPECA
8th meeting	27-29 March 2003 in Baku-Azerbaijan	Transit Transport Cooperation	SPECA joint position for the Transit Transport cooperation for the International Ministerial Meeting of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries held in Almaty-Kazakhstan, 28-29 August 2003
9 th session	12-13 March 2004 in Almaty, Kazakhstan,	Programme of work of the Central and Caucasus region on transport transit issues in view of TRANSEURASIA – 2004 Conference, in Astana, Kazakhstan	Future work focussed in the following priority areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment/strengthening of national trade and transport facilitation committees; • Accession to and implementation of important international conventions and agreements in the field of transport; • Monitoring of international freight transportation at border crossing points; • Improvement of road transport communication with China through bilateral and multilateral agreements/conventions, and • Monitoring of border crossing problems.
10th session	24 March 2005 in Issyk-Kul, Kyrgyzstan	Review of the most important transit transport issues of the Central Asian and Caucasus region	Concrete tasks to be targeted by the Group in the period 2005-2006 were identified and agreed among participating countries
11th session	29-30 March 2006 in Almaty, Kazakhstan	Transit transport issues of the Central Asian and Caucasus region, with reference to the SPECA PWG-TBC programme of work and the Almaty Programme of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on the SPECA road and rail networks and their respective maps; • Recommendation to consider establishing/strengthening national transport facilitation committees • Structure of the SPECA PWG-TBC database on transport endorsed
12th session	13-14 March 2007 in Dushanbe, Tajikistan	Transit Transport Cooperation and National measures to develop inland transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New project proposals of common interest to SPECA countries approved; • Technical Assistance for SPECA member countries requested; • SPECA member countries requested to accede to and implement the major UNECE Agreements and Conventions in the field of transport; • Five measures to improve the implementation of the TIR and Harmonization Conventions in the SPECA region, incl. regular training on TIR procedures for Customs officials with the assistance of the TIR Executive Board and TIR Secretariat recommended; Each SPECA country encouraged to participate in the UNECE/WHO Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme (THE PEP).

Session	Date - Place	Main topics	Outcomes
13th session	12 - 13 March 2008 in Almaty, Kazakhstan	Transport infrastructure and facilitation issues in relation to the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilateral consultations on border crossing issues; • Review of priority transport databases development (rail routes, road routes, border crossing points, intermodal transport) for the SPECA region; • SPECA guide on road wayside facilities
14th session	17-18 March 2009 in Almaty, Kazakhstan	Border crossings and customs problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing importance of road safety; • Opening of a new test centre for Perishable foodstuffs
15 th session	7 and 8 April 2010 in Almaty, Kazakhstan	Transport and Border Crossing Facilitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPECA countries were invited to support the development of a unified rail transport law and the promotion of rail transport; • Outstanding issues related to the accession to and implementation of the main UN conventions to be identified with the assistance of UNECE and UNESCAP secretariats; • Importance stressed of UNECE Inland Transport Committee (ITC) and UNESCAP Time/Cost-Distance methodologies for identification and isolation of bottlenecks along international routes and corridors; • SPECA countries invited to set national road safety targets and work towards their achievement
16 th session	20 and 21 April 2011 in Almaty, Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progress made in the implementation of the project on the development of Euro-Asian transport linkages; • Efforts to accede to and effectively implement the UN conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPECA countries encouraged to develop national road safety policies and joint the UN Decade of Action; • SPECA member States encouraged to actively participate in the EATL Phase II project; • SPECA member countries who are not yet parties to the ADR and the ATP encouraged to join;
17th session	6 and 7 June 2012 in Almaty, Kazakhstan	Transport and Border Crossing Facilitation in the framework of the Almaty Programme of Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPECA countries encouraged to support the continuation of the EATL project and actively participate in its initiatives such as the development of block trains in the region and the update of the comparison study; • Handbook of Best practices at border crossings – a trade and transport facilitation perspective, jointly published by UNECE and OSCE, recognized as a tool for knowledge sharing and border crossing improvement, • SPECA countries encouraged to intensify their efforts to accede to all the agreements relating to the Transport of Dangerous Goods and agreed to establish some coordination mechanisms for technical assistance and capacity building workshops in this field.

Annex 2

Memoranda of Understanding signed between the UNECE and other international governmental and professional organizations

Organisation concerned	Date of Signature	Area of Work	Complements
1. CEI	May 1998	Cooperation Agreement in the field of trade, transport and environment	MoU + Cooperation Agreement
2. IEC, ISO, ITU	24 March 2000	Standardisation in the field of electronic business	Supplement an initial MoU of January 1995
3. World Customs Organization	25 April 2001	Promotion of trade and transport facilitation	
4.. BSEC	July 2001	Economic analysis and statistics, environment, energy, inland transport, trade, industry and entrepreneurship	
5. UIC	February 2002	UNECE acting as Executing Agency for the TER Project	
5 bis. UIC	24 May 2010	More global MoU on strengthened cooperation	
6. SITPRO	May 2002	UNeDocs Project	
7. ICC	23 July 2002	For the UN Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business (UN/CEFACT)	
8. IRU	6 February 2003	On TEM Project and TEMStat	No time limit
9. ASECAP	26 February 2003	On TEM Project and TEM Master Plan	No time limit
10. ECO	24 June 2003	4 areas : Transport; Trade, Industry and Entrepreneurship; Sustainable energy development; Environment; economic analysis and statistics	
10 bis. ECO & IDB	29 March 2011	Addendum specific for transport but tripartite	First MoU to include an IFI (the Islamic Bank of Development)
11. WTPF	November 2004	Trade facilitation and electronic business	
12. OSCE	6 December 2004	5 = environment, energy, sustainable development; Integration, trade and transport; Investment climate; Poverty, social exclusion and education; Public and corporate governance	The other signatory was Jan Kubis
13. EurASEC IPA	January 2007	Standards for trade facilitation, transport, environment and housing	Valid for 3 years, renewable
14. UNESCAP and EurASEC	23 May 2007	5 = Sustainable development and environment; Water and energy resources; Transport networks and facilitation; trade policy and facilitation; Information and communication technologies	Until end May 2012
15. TRACECA	4 December 2008	Transport; border crossing procedures, trade facilitation, environment human resources development	
16. European Commission (DG TREN) ,+ JRC	23 January 2009	Implementation of the digital tachygraph within the AETR	UNECE and European Commission services will contribute to further development of the system after 30 June 2012