

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

**Protocol of the fifth session**  
**of the PWG-Transport and Border Crossing Facilitation**

Almaty, 4-6 October 2000

**General observations**

1. The Project Working Group (PWG) held its fifth session in Almaty from 4-6 October 2000.

**Attendance**

2. The session was attended by the delegations of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Tajikistan. UN ECE, ESCAP, UNDP, European Commission, OSCE, IRU, Islamic Development Bank, and The World Bank also attended the session. The list of participants is attached as Annex I.

**Agenda**

3. The proposed agenda of the session was adopted unanimously. The text of the Agenda is attached as Annex II.

**Discussion and Recommendations**

4. The Ambassador-at-Large of Kazakhstan, Mr. Amangaliyev, greeted the participants of the 5<sup>th</sup> session and emphasized the importance of its work. He also informed the session of the official presentation of SPECA at the Eurasian Economic Summit (27 April 2000). At that meeting the Concept of SPECA and the joint statement of SPECA Participating Countries, ECE and ESCAP, were adopted.
5. The Chairman informed the participants on the prior communication with national delegations in preparation for this session. It was noted that the Protocol of the fourth session of the PWG and requests for information, in accordance with the decisions of the fourth session, were circulated to all participating SPECA countries and international organizations. The materials submitted by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan were processed and submitted to the session in a tabular format. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan submitted no information.

6. The Chairman informed the meeting of international events of particular interest to SPECA, which took place since the fourth session of the PWG. In particular he mentioned the conference “TRANSEURASIA-2000” in Astana, 2<sup>nd</sup> Eurasian Conference in St. Petersburg, Asian Development Bank conference on Regional Cooperation in the area of Transport. He also summarized the aims and purposes of the project “Support of Transit Corridors Policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan”. The project will be financed by EU TACIS at the national level.
7. The UNDP representative informed the participants that the request of the PWG Transport and Border Crossing concerning the inclusion of representatives of ECE, ESCAP and PWG into the Steering Committee of the project Great Silk Road will be considered in the course of the official presentation of the project in November 2000 in China.
8. With regard to the list of priority infrastructure investment projects already completed by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, it was recommended that Kazakhstan should forward the list to Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan and request that the latter two also submit such lists.
9. It was also proposed that the Chairman of the PWG sends the list of investment projects to the major international financial institutions in order to ascertain the requirements of those institutions with regard to these project ideas. On this basis the available investment project information could be adjusted and specific proposals should be submitted to interested financial institutions.
10. With reference to the proposal by the PWG for a detailed study of land transport routes of the TRACECA corridor, it was proposed that Kazakhstan, as the lead country, should continue the dialogue with the European Commission in order to have a final decision on the issue.
11. The consideration of the issue concerning the opening international passenger traffic on route Almaty-Tashkent-Tehran-Istanbul of Trans-Asian Railway was postponed in view of the absence of an ECO representative. The Chairman was requested to obtain the related information from ECO by correspondence. It was also proposed to request ECO to ensure the participation of their representative at the next session of the PWG-TBC.
12. The meeting strongly supported the idea of holding SPECA/IRU seminars on the issues of economic significance of road transport, to be conducted in 2000. The Chairman was requested to bring this support to the attention of his Government.
13. It was decided that SPECA PWG will consider the Programme of Work for 2001-02 at the next session of the PWG.

14. The meeting noted both interregional and intra-regional nature of the issues covered by the PWG. Therefore the meeting reiterated its strong support to the participation in the next sessions of the PWG of all the countries neighbouring the Central Asia region, as well as other international organizations and financial institutions. Such participation is also important to ensure proper coordination of activities of all parties concerned. It was suggested that Kazakhstan, as the lead country in the PWG, should extend the appropriate invitations.
15. Representatives of ECE and ESCAP briefed the session on The Second International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport (St. Petersburg, 12-13 September 2000). The Conference recognized the importance and relevance of the work of the SPECA PWG on Transport and Border Crossing Facilitation. The Conference supported the establishment of four Euro-Asian Land Transport Corridors, all of which cross Central Asia. A copy of the Conference Declaration (Final Draft-D) was submitted to the PWG secretariat. The updated list of the "UN International Agreements and Conventions in the Field of Transport," as of 15 August 2000, in English and Russian, was also provided to the meeting by the ECE.
16. It was stressed that problem issues of transit of goods and people through the territory of SPECA countries are of increasing importance and concern to the SPECA member states. In this regard, it was reiterated that border crossing issues should be the priority area of the work of the PWG at present.
17. The experience of Southeast Europe in the area of transport and border crossing facilitation was presented to the meeting as relevant to the SPECA region. Specific examples of region-wide cooperation were cited and corresponding documents provided to the PWG secretariat for information. Guidelines for the establishment of national committees to facilitate transport and border crossing procedures ("PRO Committees"), which has already been discussed in early meetings, have been developed by the association of Southeast European PRO Committees (SECIPRO). Copies of the "Guidelines" were submitted to the secretariat.
18. It was noted that the experience of the Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI) in formulating a memorandum of understanding (MoU) among the participating countries has proved to be an effective means of focusing regional cooperation on priority objectives.
19. As an immediate practical step, the development of a similar memorandum of understanding (MoU) among the SPECA countries and initiation of meetings/ consultations on the subject was considered. The importance of a document covering road as well as rail transport was emphasized. As an important initiative in this direction, the preparation of a MoU covering road transport was recommended in view of the priority nature of the problems in Central Asia. A related unofficial working paper was made available to the participating countries and organizations.

20. National comments by all PWG member states on the above working paper will be incorporated by the PWG secretariat in a draft paper for consideration at the next session of the PWG. It was stressed, that in the preparation of the MoU the provisions of existing documents, such as ECO Framework Transit Agreement, CIS Agreement on Weight and Dimensions of Road Vehicles, etc. should be taken into consideration, to ensure uniformity and consistency of the approach.
21. It was also decided that in parallel to the preparation of the MoU, bilateral meetings/consultations within the PWG should be conducted among the countries of Central Asia to identify and prioritise existing problems and to initiate the introduction of remedy solutions. The first such meeting to address the problem issues identified in the transport area between Kyrgyz Republic and Kazakhstan should take place in November-December 2000 with reports/information to be submitted to the next session of the group.
22. As transit traffic through Central Asia is characterized by uneven loads among some of the neighbouring countries, there is a need for a study on possible solutions. IRU offered to assist in the preparation of an analysis, and the offer was appreciated.
23. The meeting further agreed that important steps are required towards rationalization and convergence of charging policies for international road transport of goods. Such charging policies should be based on the principles of cost-relatedness, non-discrimination and transparency, including sufficient advance notice of changes in charges.
24. The representative of IRU tabled a paper entitled, "Barriers to International Road Transport" (IRU, Moscow, August 2000) and the "Kishinev Declaration on Barriers to International Road Transport," adopted at the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IRU Liaison Committee to the CIS (5 September 2000). In order to reduce or eliminate barriers to international road transport, he recommended that priority be given to the following initiatives:
  - a. Ensure uniformity in road charges for overloading on roads among the SPECA states;
  - b. Implement the TIR Convention throughout the SPECA region;
  - c. Eliminate road charges or taxes by subsidiary Government authorities (i.e. municipalities or state regional bodies).

He further included Customs, border police and road police as other priority areas requiring attention and action for reduction of barriers.

26. A representative of Kazakhstan informed the meeting of the latest decrees providing for limitation of inspections on international roads, on increasing weight and size limitations on international road transport vehicles, and on the procedure of inspection of international road vehicles. The decrees provide for minimization of the number of inspections and bring weight and size limits to the existing European standards. It was decided that the texts of the decrees should be circulated among all SPECA countries for information, together with a request for the situation on these issues in those countries. The PWG highly appreciates the above-mentioned decrees and considers that they deserve careful consideration by all SPECA countries.

### **Date and place of the sixth session of the PWG**

27. It was decided to hold the sixth session of the PWG in Almaty on 9-11 April 2001. The preliminary agenda is the following:
1. Opening of the Session
  2. Adoption of the Agenda
  3. Reports from the SPECA Transport and Border Crossing Coordinators
    - a. Follow-up from the 5<sup>th</sup> session of PWG
    - b. Status of accession to and implementation of principal international transport conventions
    - c. Progress on problem issues of international transit of goods and people through the territory of SPECA countries
    - d. Progress in the establishment of national committees for trade and transport facilitation.
  4. Further development of the SPECA Border Crossing Database.
  5. Comments from international financial institutions on SPECA priority investment projects
  6. SPECA draft memorandum of understanding on international road transport of goods as a first step towards addressing the problem issues in all modes of international transport
  7. PWG on Transport and Border Crossing Program of Work 2001-2002.
  8. Other business
  9. Adoption of the Protocol

Chairman of the Session

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A. Z. Nalibaev  
Almaty, 6 October 2000

**Annex I****LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****5th Session of SPECA PWG on Transport and Border Crossing**

4-6 October 2000, Almaty

**Republic of Kazakhstan**

Abdukalyk Z. Nalibaev	First Vice-Minister of Transport and Communications
Ibragim A. Amangaliev	Ambassador on Special Mission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Abelgazy K. Kusainov	Vice-Minister of Transport and Communications
Erzhan Sh. Kalkabaev	Chief of the Committee on Transport Control, Ministry of Transport and Communications
Aigul T. Idrisova	Head of Foreign Relations Department of the Ministry of Transport and Communications
Shikhabadain K. Makhanov	Head of the Department of Road Transport of the Committee on Automobile Roads and Automobile Transport
Aidana A. Jeksekova	Head of International Finance Relations Department, Ministry of Finance
Bolat I. Adbukhalimov	Leading Inspector of Customs Control for Delivery and Goods Transit Department, Customs Committee, Ministry of State Incomes

**Kyrgyz Republic**

Anatoly Ja. Kropotkin	Deputy Head of the Foreign Relations Unit, Ministry of Transport and Communications
Barlyk A. Shaikenov	Minister Counsellor of the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic in Kazakhstan

**Republic of Tajikistan**

Akhmadzhan T. Kakhanov	Attaché of Embassy of the Republic of Tajikistan in the Republic of Kazakhstan
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**UN/ECE**

Peter Tsyba	Regional Advisor, SPECA Coordinator
Will Keenan	Regional Advisor, Southeast Europe Coordinator
Zisis Haritos	Regional Advisor on Transport

**UN/ESCAP**

Vladimir N. Timopheev	Head of Land Transport Section, Transport, Communication and Tourism Department
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***OBSERVERS*****UNDP**

Natalya Maksimchuk	Program Manager
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**European Commission**

Brian Toll	Head of the Department of Technical assistance to the TACIS Program
Alija Baidibekova	Project Coordinator on Energy, Transport and Telecommunications

**OSCE**

Madina Ibrasheva	Expert on Ecology and Economy
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**Executive Committee ICG CAEC**

Baktiber Sh. Sekimov	Chief Expert
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**The World Bank**

Ruslan Mamishev	Operations Officer
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**Islamic Development Bank**

Rashid Kadyrov	Project Coordinator
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**International Road Union of the Republic of Kazakhstan (KAZATO)**

Maksat A. Saktaganov	President
Teodor L. Kaplan	General Secretary

**RSV "Kazakhstan Temir Zholy"**

ErmeK K. Sambetov	Deputy Head of Goods and Commerce Work Division
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**Institute "Kazgiprozheldortrans"**

Kanat I. Karabaev

Galina V. Vintsuk

Vice-President

Head of the Division of Technical and Economic  
Research**CJSC Research Institute on Transport**

Murat M. Bekmagambetov

Raushan D. Imanseitova

Svetlana L. Smirnova

Director of the Institute

Head of the Division of Complex Transport Problems

Senior Expert of the Division of Complex Transport  
Problems



**Annex II****AGENDA****FOURTH SESSION OF SPECA PWG ON TRANSPORT AND BORDER CROSSING**  
4-6 October 2000, Almaty

1. Opening of the Session
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Follow up from the 4<sup>th</sup> session of PWG
4. Review of the Programme of Work of PWG
5. Information on co-operative arrangements in the field of transportation of interest to SPECA.
6. Problem issues in transit of shipments through the territory of SPECA
7. Practical means of reducing existing barriers in transit of shipments in the SPECA region
8. Other business
9. Adoption of the Protocol