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INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE**

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ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION

Note by the secretariat

This note summarizes the activities of assistance to countries in transition undertaken in 1999 and 2000 by the secretariat.

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1. SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN COOPERATIVE INITIATIVE

SECI is an initiative to encourage cooperation among its member States and to facilitate their integration into European structures. The SECI participating States include: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. There are a number of SECI sectoral projects in three of which the ECE Transport Division staff and its Regional Adviser have assumed a leadership role:

1.1. SECI Project Group on Border Crossing Facilitation, chaired by Greece.

The work of this Group resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding which was signed by the SECI participating States in Athens on 28 April 1999. This MoU established specific measures to be implemented by the end of the year 2002 with a view to facilitating international road transport of goods in the region. The MoU foresees, in particular, progressive liberalization and sustainability of international road transport and, as a short term measure, the establishment of a quota-free regime for "green" and "greener and safer" lorries road vehicles. It also provides *inter alia* for the application of an international vehicle weight certificate which will do away with repetitive weighing procedures at the borders. In accordance with the provisions of the MoU, a Regional Road Transport Committee has been established to ensure adequate coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the provisions of the MoU and eventually the elaboration of a multilateral framework agreement on road transport. The secretariat of the UN/ECE provides the necessary secretariat services for the Committee which is, at present, hosted by Greece and will be hosted in 2001 by Turkey.

1.2. SECI Project Group IV on Transport Infrastructure Development along Main International Routes, chaired by Bulgaria.

The activities of this Group can be summarized as follows:

1.2.1. Lists "A" and "B" of Priority Transport Projects.

At their Ministerial Conference (Vienna, 3- 4 October 1999) the SECI Participating States decided on the establishment of two Lists of projects, "A" and "B", to be tabled with the Working Table II of the Stability Pact on Economic Reconstruction, Development and Cooperation for South East Europe, for transport, energy and environment. List "A" would consist of small scale and short duration projects with a starting date in early 2000; List "B" of longer term projects with more substantial resource requirements.

Subsequently the SECI Project Group IV on Transport Infrastructure, at its meeting in Sofia on 30 November - 1 December 1998, established the requested Lists "A" and "B" and submitted them to the Working Table II of the Stability Pact and to EIB, the latter having assumed the role of the Coordinator for the compilation and follow-up of the projects. The Stability Pact at its subsequent meetings (including the most recent ones on 29-30 March 2000 in Brussels and 3 May 2000 in Rome) approved and elaborated the Quick Start and Medium Term Project Packages. More than 50% of the funds of both Packages were allocated to transport

infrastructure projects. Further, most of the later transport projects had been submitted earlier by the SECI Group IV through its Lists "A" and "B".

1.2.2. Joint Statement of Cooperation with the Stability Pact.

The participating States of the SECI Project Group IV at its meeting held in Sofia on 18-19 May 2000 recognized that there was a need for the establishment of a separate forum within the Stability Pact structure with a view to monitoring the implementation of the transport infrastructure projects on its behalf. Consequently the Group issued a Joint Statement addressed to the Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact in which it expressed the participants' "...willingness to assist the Stability Pact, as a Working Group, in the framework of transport infrastructure and operations projects".

1.2.3. World Bank Trade and Transport Facilitation project for Southeast Europe (TTFSE)

The World Bank TTFSE Project is currently under implementation. Its next Regional Steering Committee is scheduled to be held on 28 September 2000.

1.3. Ad hoc Working Group on the reduction of border stopping time of shuttle trains.

Ad hoc Working Group on the reduction of border stopping time of shuttle trains. Three meetings were held on 20-21 September, 7-8 December 1999 and 11-12 May 2000. The ad hoc Working Group developed a list of proposals with a view to improving the organization of shuttle train movements and to increasing the volume of passengers and goods transported in international rail traffic. In this connection, the Working Party also agreed on (i) data to be transmitted in advance of the train arrival at the border station and (ii) the technical equipment to be used for the transmission of data between border stations of neighbouring countries. The Working Group intends to resume its discussion in September 2000 with a view to further reducing border stopping time of international shuttle trains.

2. **SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA (SPECA)**

On 26 March 1998, the Presidents of four Asian states - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan - at their meeting within the framework of the Interstate Council of those States, signed jointly the Tashkent Declaration on the ECE/ESCAP Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA), in which they have stated their intention to establish and implement the SPECA programme. Turkmenistan, not being a member of the Interstate Council, was not present at the meeting but is expected to join SPECA soon.

The Tashkent Declaration identified the following priority areas for cooperation:

- Development of transport infrastructure and cross-border facilitation;
- Rational and efficient use of energy and water resources of Central Asia;
- International Economic Conference on Tajikistan and a joint strategy for regional development and attraction of foreign investment;
- Regional cooperation on the development of multiple routes for pipeline transportation of hydrocarbons to global markets.

Kazakhstan is the lead state for the SPECA Project Working Group on the Development of Transport Infrastructure and Cross-border Facilitation Project. This Group has held four meetings thus far: 20-22 October 1998, Almaty; 7-8 June 1999, Astana, new capital of Kazakhstan, 18-19 October 1999, Almaty ; and 19-20 April 2000, Almaty. The meetings included representatives of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, ECE, ESCAP, the office of the UN resident representative, and a number of IFIs and international organizations. The fifth meeting of the Group is scheduled to be held in Almaty on 3-7 October 1999. Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have not as yet participated in any of the SPECA Transport meetings.

3. BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION ORGANIZATION (BSEC)

BSEC was established in 1992 with the aim of developing the Black Sea region into a zone of peace, stability and prosperity. Economic cooperation is adopted as the main route to it. Its member States of BSEC include Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Hellenic Republic, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine.

The ECE secretariat participated at the First and Second Meetings of the Council of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of BSEC. They were held respectively in Thessaloniki on 27 October 1999 under the Chairmanship of the Hellenic Republic, and in Chisinau on 27 April 2000 under the chairmanship of the Republic of Moldova. The next BSEC activity "Business Opportunities in the BSEC Region" is scheduled to be held on 7-9 September 2000.

4. EUROPEAN COMMISSION INITIATIVES

The Transport Division of the ECE secretariat has participated in a number of EU led initiatives including the following:

4.1. Black Sea Pan European Transport Area (BS-PETrA)

The ECE secretariat participated at the First and Second Steering Committee Meetings of BS-PETrA (Tbilisi, 1-2 July 1999 and Istanbul, 25 November 1999). In addition, it participated at the meetings of its Working Group on Transport Infrastructure Related to Ports and Hinterland Connections to Corridors (Ankara, 3 February 2000 and Istanbul, 28 March 2000); and of its Working Group on Harmonization of Institutional Aspects of Transport and Custom Procedures (Alexandroupolis, 25-26 May 2000) during which the EC proposed the BS-PETrA merge with TRACECA.

4.2. TACIS Seminar on Pan-European Transport Corridors II and IX

In the context of the TACIS project *Improvement of Traffic Flows on Pan-European Transport Corridors II and IX*, an International Seminar was held in Kiev on 23-26 May 2000. The Seminar was attended by delegates from Belarus, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation and Ukraine, as well as by representatives from international organizations, with the objective of selecting a list of bankable projects for preparation and submission to the International Financing Institutions.

The UN/ECE secretariat actively contributed to the Seminar, particularly by presenting the potential and difficulties linked to private financing of transport infrastructures, as well as the recommendations recently issued by the UN/ECE Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) group.

5. THE TRANS-EUROPEAN NORTH-SOUTH MOTORWAY (TEM) AND THE TRANS-EUROPEAN RAILWAY (TER) PROJECTS

ECE is a signatory to the TEM and TER Trust Fund Cooperation Agreements and is responsible for the technical and administrative backstopping of both projects. As part of this effort, assistance was provided to the TEM and TER countries through the organization and holding of meetings, preparation of documents, contacts with other Governments and institutions to work with or support the project and report on project developments to the ECE bodies as well as holding meetings with Governments or entities who could potentially participate in or be members to the Projects. Further details regarding the activities being carried out by the TEM and TER projects are being circulated in documents TRANS/SC.2/2000/15 and TRANS/WP.5/2000/13.

6. ADVISORY MISSIONS BY THE REGIONAL ADVISER

In the context of assistance to countries in transition, over the period July 1999 to June 2000, the ECE Regional Adviser on Transport conducted the following advisory missions:

6.1. July to December 1999

- 30 June-2 July, Tbilisi (Georgia);
- 2-4 October, Vienna (Austria);
- 17-19 October, Almaty (Kazakhstan);
- 24-28 October, Thessaloniki (Greece);
- 10-12 November, Sofia (Bulgaria);
- 25 November, Istanbul (Turkey),
- 26 November, Izmir (Turkey),
- 30 November-1 December, Sofia (Bulgaria);
- 17 December, Rome (Italy);

6.2. January to June 2000

- 16-17 January, Dubrovnik (Croatia);
- 3 February, Ankara (Turkey);
- 10-11 February, Skopje (FYROM);
- 16-17 March, Sofia (Bulgaria);
- 28 March, Istanbul (Turkey);

- 3-4 April, Bratislava (Slovakia);
- 19-20 April, Almaty (Kazakhstan);
- 25-27 April, Chisinau (Moldova);
- 18-19 May, Sofia (Bulgaria);
- 25-26 May, Alexandroupolis (Greece);
- 20 June, Vienna (Austria);
- 21-25 June, Prague (Czech Republic)

7. UN/ECE TRUST FUND FOR ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION (TFACT)

1. The integration of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, that are in transition to a market economy, into the international community depends to a considerable extent upon their capacity to participate in the meetings of international organizations and other international fora. These countries, particularly the new independent states, are encountering great difficulty in financing their participants in seminars, symposia, workshops and other informal fora organized within the framework of ECE.

2. The Trust Fund provides a channel through which Governments, international organizations, institutions and other donors may contribute funds to help the transition countries and new independent states defray the costs of their participation in seminars, symposia, workshops and other informal fora organized within the framework of ECE. The Fund may also cover other forms of technical assistance. It is intended to complement and not duplicate bilateral or multilateral assistance.

3. Donors may indicate the specific area of work, activities, informal meetings or purposes for which they wish their contributions to be earmarked within the broad framework of the Fund, or the country or countries for which the contribution is intended.

4. The funds in trust may be used to pay local costs at the venue of the informal meeting (per diem) or the transportation costs (air fare etc.) to and from the meeting, or both if available funds permit.

5. The ECE secretariat matches the requests received from transition countries for assistance with the funds contributed, taking into account the conditions set by donors.

6. A programme support charge of 13 per cent to cover secretariat services is applied to contributions.

7. The opening of the UN/ECE Trust Fund is intended to relieve donors of the considerable work involved in matching requests with available donations, issuing travel documents, making payments, processing travel claims and in maintaining accounts.

8. The Trust Fund is administered and audited in accordance with United Nations financial regulations and rules.

9. Contributions to the Fund may be made either:

(a) All contributions in **US Dollars** should only be paid into the Chase account as follows:

Account number: 001-1-508629 (**for contributions in US Dollars only**)

Bank name: Chase Manhattan Bank, New York

Account title: UNOG General Fund

General ledger: UN-0503456 (for UNOG/Finance reference only)

Address: International Agencies Branch

270 Park Avenue, 43rd Floor

New York, N.Y. 10017, USA

ABA: 021000021 (US Banking Code)

Reference: "UN/ECE Trust Fund for Assistance to Countries in Transition TFACT"

Allotment account no. MEC-25-800;

(b) or all other currencies should continue to be paid into the UBS SA accounts as follows:

Account number: 240-CO-590,160.0

Bank name: UBS SA

Account title: UNOG General Fund

Bank address: 2, rue de la Confédération

Case Postale 2770

CH-1211 Geneva 2

Bank swift code: UBSWCHZ12A

Reference: "UN/ECE Trust Fund for Assistance to Countries in Transition TFACT"

Allotment account no. MEC-25-800.

10. In either case, a communication should be sent by the donors, informing the ECE of the amount contributed, the date of payment and the purposes for which the funds are to be earmarked (see paragraph 3).

TFACT

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