



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
13 September 2011

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration

International Conference on Knowledge-based Development and Innovative Entrepreneurship

Baku, 24-25 November 2011

Annotated provisional agenda

I. Provisional agenda

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. High-level segment
3. Substantive session on promoting innovation in the knowledge-based economy: the role of public initiatives
4. Substantive session on the changing nature of entrepreneurship in the knowledge-based economy
5. Substantive session on the role of Public-Private Partnerships in promoting information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure development
6. Conclusions and closing

II. Annotations

1. Adoption of the agenda

1. At the fifth session of the UNECE Committee on Economic Cooperation and Integration (CECI) held on 1 - 3 December 2010, the delegation of Azerbaijan invited UNECE to organize an international conference on knowledge-based development and innovative entrepreneurship in Azerbaijan in 2011.¹
2. Following a series of consultations with the Government the Republic of Azerbaijan, it was agreed to organize such a Conference in Baku on 24 and 25 November 2011 within the framework of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia

¹ ECE/CECI/2010/2, para. 29.

(SPECA) and as part of the activities of the SPECA Project Working Group on Knowledge-based Development (SPECA PWG on KBD).² The Conference will be an integrated policy-oriented event with components of capacity-building. It will promote knowledge sharing and discussion on policies and good practices in several CECI thematic areas, such as innovative development and knowledge-based competitiveness, protection of intellectual property rights, entrepreneurship and public-private partnerships with special emphasis on SPECA member countries, namely countries of Central Asia and Azerbaijan.

3. The substantive sessions of the Conference will be organized as a series of practical, policy-oriented presentations and follow-up debate providing a platform for a broad exchange of practical experiences and lessons learned among policymakers and other stakeholders.

4. The Conference will be opened by a representative of the Government of the host country and by the UNECE Executive Secretary.

2. High-level segment

5. During this session, senior policymakers and business leaders will introduce strategic policy issues related to the promotion of knowledge-based development and innovative entrepreneurship, including the development of a suitable infrastructure. Particular reference will be made to the contribution of information and communication technology (ICT) to these policy aims.

3 Substantive session on promoting innovation in the knowledge-based economy: the role of public initiatives

6. This session will consider public policies fostering innovation with a particular emphasis on the opportunities and challenges faced by countries with economies in transition. Special reference will be made to the role of ICT as a driver of innovation and entrepreneurial activities.

7. The topics that could be addressed in this session include:

- The creation of favourable framework conditions for knowledge-based economy;
- The design and use of different policy instruments, including those targeting the promotion of collaboration among stakeholders in innovation process; and
- The role of ICT, in particular the development and the use of high-speed broadband networks as an enabler of innovation and innovation capabilities.

4. Substantive session on the changing nature of entrepreneurship in the knowledge-based economy

8. Rapid technological change, in particular the development of ICT has transformed the global nature of the world economy and altered entrepreneurs' business practices. It has facilitated broader participation of various stakeholders in innovation process and has helped entrepreneurs to introduce new products and processes. It has also made outsourcing and off-shoring more efficient, thus transforming some business sectors. At the same time,

² The fourth session of the SPECA PWG on KBD will be held after the International Conference on Knowledge-based Development and Innovative Entrepreneurship on 25 November 2011.

some of the traditional challenges and barriers to entrepreneurial activities in the emerging market economies in Europe and Central Asia remain and require further policy attention.

9. The session will consider the following topics related to the changing nature of entrepreneurship:

- Policies facilitating the emergence and growth of innovation-based enterprises, in particular those that operate in the ICT/ICT enabled sector;
- Challenges and opportunities that entrepreneurs face when establishing an enterprise based on research and development results;
- Creation of a climate conducive to the new start-ups and spin off companies;
- Financing of innovative entrepreneurs and the role of specialized financial providers;
- Ways and means to strengthen linkages between firms and knowledge-generating partners; and
- Legal and regulatory conditions for enterprise development and commercialization of the applied research results.

5. Substantive session on the role of Public-Private Partnerships in promoting ICT infrastructure development

10. A well-developed ICT infrastructure such as high-speed broadband networks support not only innovation but also various services both in the public and private sectors, such as eGovernment, intelligent transport networks, energy saving services, cost saving health care services, green ICT applications, interactive learning and cloud computing. These services can make an important contribution to the competitiveness of the economy.

11. At the same time, the public sector of the transition economies faces challenges in securing necessary resources and expertise to finance and to manage ICT infrastructure development.

12. The session will discuss the following issues relating to the financing of the ICT infrastructure development, including:

- The role of government and the private sector in developing ICT infrastructure;
- Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) as a model to bridge the gap between the existing and required ICT infrastructure; and
- Experiences and examples of PPPs in ICT infrastructure projects in the UNECE region and beyond.

6. Conclusions and closing

13. The moderators of sessions will summarize major findings and recommendations made during the Conference. The UNECE secretariat will prepare the Conference report in consultation with the moderators.

14. Closing remarks will be presented by representatives of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the UNECE secretariat.

III. Tentative timetable

| <i>Date and time</i> | <i>Agenda Item</i> |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Thursday, 24 November 2011 | |
| 09:30-13:00 | Item 1. Adoption of the agenda Item 2. High-level segment Item 3. Substantive session on promoting innovation in the knowledge-based economy: the role of public initiatives |
| 14:00-17:00 | Item 4. Substantive session on changing nature of entrepreneurship in the knowledge-based economy |
| Friday, 25 November 2011 | |
| 09:30-12:30 | Item 5. Substantive session on the role of Public-Private Partnerships in promoting ICT infrastructure development |
| 12:30-13:00 | Item 6. Conclusions and closing |
