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**Thematic Working Group on Sustainable Transport, Transit and  
Connectivity (TWG-STTC)**

23<sup>rd</sup> Session  
27-28 August 2018  
Astana, Kazakhstan

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS  
OF THE 23<sup>rd</sup> SESSION OF THE SPECA THEMATIC WORKING GROUP ON  
SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT, TRANSIT AND CONNECTIVITY<sup>1</sup>**

27-28 August 2018  
Astana, Kazakhstan

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<sup>1</sup> This document has been issued without formal editing

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the presentation and consideration of the session documents as stipulated in the Agenda of the 23<sup>rd</sup> session of SPECA Thematic Working Group on Sustainable Transport, Transit and Connectivity (TWG-STTC), the Thematic Working Group adopted the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. The TWG adopted the report of its 22<sup>nd</sup> session;
2. The TWG noted with satisfaction the information provided by the representatives of SPECA countries, UNESCAP and UNECE on transport infrastructure development and international transport facilitation, road safety, other activities and initiatives at national and regional level;
3. The TWG encouraged those SPECA states which have not already done so, to take measures towards becoming parties to or implementing the Intergovernmental Agreements on the Asian Highway Network, on the Trans-Asian Railway Network and on Dry Ports through own initiatives and active participation in the ESCAP activities related to the development of Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway Networks and dry ports of international importance;
4. The TWG noted the outcomes of the seventh meeting of the Working Group on the Asian Highway Network (13-15 December 2017, Bangkok, Thailand). The TWG welcomed strengthening the role of the Agreement as an institutional framework supporting the road safety by adding a new annex to the Agreement entitled “Asian Highway Design Standards for Road Safety” and a detailed “Design Guidelines” for road safety;
5. The TWG invited SPECA countries to exchange information with the secretariat (e-mail: [escapttd@un.org](mailto:escapttd@un.org)) on a regular basis on the latest status of key national and regional road and rail infrastructure projects, and provide the secretariat with information on ongoing and/or planned initiatives relating to policies and projects

aiming at developing transport infrastructure of international importance in their respective countries, including issues and challenges;

6. The TWG encouraged SPECA Governments to implement the recommendations of the Phase III of the EATL Project contained in the EATL Phase III Report and invited SPECA countries to actively participate in the International Conference on Making Euro-Asian Transport Corridors Operational to be organized in Geneva on 3 September 2018;
7. The TWG reaffirmed the importance of the transport-related UN legal instruments and invited SPECA countries to intensify their efforts to accede to and effectively implement them;
8. The TWG encouraged SPECA countries to continue supporting the implementation of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, including the Regional Action Programme for Sustainable Transport Connectivity in Asia and the Pacific, phase I (2017-2021);
9. The TWG acknowledged transport facilitation efforts of UNESCAP including Regional Strategic Framework for the Facilitation of International Road Transport and Regional Cooperation Framework for the Facilitation of International Railway Transport, as well as eight mutually complementary transport facilitation tools and models and invited SPECA countries to apply them;
10. The TWG welcomed projects implemented by ESCAP on the comprehensive planning of Eurasian Transport Corridors, development of seamless rail-based intermodal transport services in Northeast and Central Asia for enhancing Euro-Asian transport linkages, as well as harmonizing rules and regulations for facilitation of international railway transport and encouraged Member countries to use the studies developed by the Secretariat under these projects;
11. The TWG invited SPECA member States to consider acceding to the Intergovernmental Agreement on International Road Transport along the Asian Highway Network;

12. The TWG encouraged Member countries to actively participate in the activities of the UNECE, as far as border crossing facilitation is concerned, particularly by engaging actively in the development of new convention on rail border-crossings for passengers and their luggage;
13. The TWG took note of UNECE and UNESCAP secretariats willingness to provide assistance in identifying any outstanding issues related to the accession and implementation of the transport-related UN legal instruments;
14. The TWG invited SPECA countries to think about introducing new technologies in the implementation of the UN legal instruments including joining to those which allow electronic information processing like eTIR projects and support the adoption of the new Annex 11 of the TIR Convention;
15. The TWG gave its support to the preparation and implementation of the Unified Railway Law and encouraged Governments to actively participate in the activities of the Group of Experts towards Unified Railway Law and in the pilot tests for the application of URL;
16. The TWG invited SPECA countries to provide regular, preferably on a yearly basis, updates to and active use of ESCAP Asian Highway network database and ESCAP Statistical database for SDGs and transport related statistics, as well as to provide the texts of missing agreements, additions, corrections or updates to ESCAP's Database of Agreements on International Road Transport;
17. The TWG welcomed the SPECA Workshop on Transport-related SDGs held in Astana in November 2017 and invited SPECA countries to actively participate in upcoming SPECA Transport Connectivity Workshop which will be held in autumn 2018;
18. The TWG encouraged SPECA countries to renew efforts to provide annual transport and road safety specific statistics to UNECE using the web common questionnaire. Member States that do not have access to the questionnaire should contact the UNECE secretariat to obtain log in details;

19. The TWG encouraged SPECA countries to establish or strengthen national coordination mechanisms and to mobilize public and private sector resources to finance the development of transport networks;
20. The TWG requested SPECA countries to continue their efforts in developing and implementing national road safety strategies and action plans, strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation to achieve goals and targets in line with the Decade of Action for Road Safety, updated Regional Road Safety Goals, Targets and Indicators for Asia and the Pacific as well as road safety-related SDGs;
21. The TWG encouraged SPECA countries to use the SafeFITS model to assess the results of national road safety activities and strategic actions;
22. The TWG invited to build on the results of Road Safety Performance Reviews (RSPR) and encourage SPECA countries to ask for technical assistance in road safety through RSPR;
23. The TWG approved the Draft Agenda for the 24<sup>th</sup> session of the SPECA TWG-STTC;
24. The TWG acknowledged the information provided about the SPECA evaluation and the conclusions and recommendations of the expert group meeting held in Almaty, Kazakhstan on 11-12 June 2018 on strengthening the SPECA. The TWG reiterated its strong support to continuation of the TWG-STTC activities and encouraged the participants to inform their respective national representatives in the SPECA Governing Council on the importance of TWG-STTC;
25. The TWG agreed that the date and the place of the next session would be decided later and invited SPECA countries to express their interest in hosting the 24<sup>th</sup> session of SPECA TWG-STTC;
26. The TWG invited SPECA countries which were not able to attend 23<sup>rd</sup> session of the TWG-STTC to actively participate in future sessions;
27. The TWG expressed high appreciation to the Islamic Development Bank for the continuous support to SPECA TWG-STTC activities;

28. The TWG expressed its sincere gratitude to the Ministry for Investments and Development of Kazakhstan for hosting the 23<sup>rd</sup> session of SPECA TWG-STTC and excellent arrangements made for the session;

29. The conclusions and recommendations of the 23<sup>rd</sup> session of SPECA TWG-STTC were unanimously adopted on 28 August 2018 in Astana, Kazakhstan;