

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

110th meeting
Geneva, 3 April 2020

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

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Context for agenda item 7: UNECE and partnerships

(for information)

Note by the secretariat

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1. Since taking office, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Ms. Olga Algayerova, has made it a priority to strengthen the performance of the secretariat of the Commission with a view to deepening the impact and visibility of its work in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. She is guided in particular by the pronouncement of member States on the *Outcome of the review of the 2005 reform of ECE* (E/2013/37 E/ECE/1464, Annex III, para 25) that stipulates:

Member States emphasized the important role of the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) in providing overall direction to the ECE secretariat, promoting synergies among different subprogrammes, and making timely proposals to EXCOM to ensure tangible and effective contributions towards the outcomes of the relevant United Nations and other regional and global conferences and initiatives. The OES also bears overall responsibility for sound management and allocation and use of available human and financial resources.

2. She strives to lead the UNECE secretariat in a manner that is fit-for-purpose, as stipulated in the *Guidelines on procedures and practices for ECE bodies* (E/2013/37 E/ECE/1464, Appendix III, para 1):

It should be ensured, at all administrative levels of the secretariat and for all bodies of the Commission, that the work is carried out in a way that is member driven, participatory, consensus-oriented, transparent, responsive, effective, efficient, results-oriented and accountable.

3. To this end, the Executive Secretary requested an internal review of the partnership arrangements in place between the UNECE secretariat and other entities. The review is to take stock of the status quo and deepen the strategic focus of these partnerships, where needed, to achieve even greater value-added and impact. At the 110th meeting of the Executive Committee, the Executive Secretary wishes to report to member States some of the findings in three areas, namely:

- a) Cooperation and Partnership agreements;
- b) Centres of Excellence in subprogrammes 4, 5 and 8;
- c) Cooperation with other Regional Commissions.

Background notes on each aspect are provided in informal documents 2020/11, 2020/12, and 2020/13, respectively. These documents also aim to further clarify some questions raised by several member States during the informal consultations in November/December 2019 on interaction with third countries.

4. The partnership review is an ongoing process. The UNSDG Group at United Nations Headquarters is developing a partnership strategy for the UN system as a whole. UNECE will defer pursuit of its own partnership strategy until after the UN system strategy is in place to ensure full alignment. In the meantime, UNECE is taking a more strategic and results-oriented partnership approach and is implementing recommendations emanating from the internal review.

5. Member States are invited to exchange views on UNECE's partnership approach, current practices, and the overall review process. To facilitate the dialogue, delegations are encouraged to share with the secretariat any questions that they would like to see clarified. Kindly submit your input to unece.excom@un.org, with copy to the Secretary of the Commission, Ms. Nicola Koch (koch@un.org). **Advance contributions are welcome until 1 April 2020** to allow the secretariat to integrate the queries into the briefing materials for the session.