



**UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA  
(SPECA)**

**Sixteenth session of the SPECA Governing Council**

**(Tashkent, Uzbekistan, 19 November 2021)**

**DECISIONS**

**Decision 1 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/1)**

The Governing Council notes with satisfaction the outcomes of the 2021 SPECA Economic Forum “Sustainable Transport and Trade for a Green and Inclusive Economy after the Pandemic” held in Tashkent from 17 to 18 November 2021. The Governing Council calls upon the SPECA participating countries, UNECE and ESCAP, other United Nations agencies and programmes, and other international development partners to provide active support to the efforts to build back better the economies of Central Asia with special reference to improving connectivity and building a circular economy after the COVID-19 pandemic to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Decision 2 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/2)**

The Governing Council adopts the “Tashkent Statement” on promoting sustainable transport and trade, using the United Nations legal norms, standards, best practice recommendations and other tools, in support of sustainable development and a circular economy in the region. The Council requests the participating countries and development partners to support the implementation of this strategic document.

**Decision 3 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/3)**

The Governing Council notes with appreciation the Progress Reports on the activities of the SPECA Thematic Working Groups held in online or in hybrid format since its previous session and expresses satisfaction with the implementation of the activities covered in their reports.

The Governing Council notes with appreciation the activities of the SPECA Working Group on Trade in implementation of the SPECA Trade Facilitation Strategy and Principles of Sustainable Trade in the SPECA Subregion; the SPECA Working Group on Sustainable Transport and the SPECA Working Group on Trade in implementation of the recommendations of the Ashgabat Initiative on reducing barriers to trade and transport, using United Nations legal instruments, norms, standards and recommendations while bolstering connectivity in the SPECA subregion and the activities of the SPECA Working Group on Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development in implementation of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development.

The Council approves the Action Plan of the SPECA Innovation Strategy for Sustainable Development. It expresses its gratitude to the UNECE and ESCAP secretariats and the SPECA participating countries for the development of this document. The Governing Council notes the recommendations from the 16<sup>th</sup> session of the SPECA Working Group on Trade.

The Governing Council expresses its appreciation to the SPECA participating countries for supporting the Thematic Working Groups sessions and meetings. The Council is especially grateful to the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, the Islamic Development Bank, and other development partners for their support of the activities of the SPECA Thematic Working Groups.

#### **Decision 4 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/4)**

In light of Decision 3 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2020/3) of its fifteenth session in 2020, the Governing Council expresses gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the UNECE secretariat for conducting consultations among the SPECA participating countries in order to reach a final decision on the SPECA Secretariat and the SPECA Fund holistically.

Building upon the consensus of establishing a Secretariat of SPECA on a rotational basis to ensure organizational support to the activities of the Programme, considering the official positions of the countries on the financing and staffing mechanisms, raised at the 16<sup>th</sup> session of the Governing Council, it decides to carry out additional consultations and establish an expert group to draft the Terms of Reference of the Secretariat and the modalities of its operation, using the concept note proposed by Kazakhstan as a basis. The Governing Council notes the offer of Kazakhstan to host the Secretariat in Almaty as the first location for the Secretariat.

#### **Decision 5 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/5)**

The Governing Council reaffirms the agreement of the SPECA countries to strengthen the effectiveness and impact of SPECA as a regional cooperation platform through establishing a flexible, inclusive funding mechanism for practical programmatic cooperation – a SPECA Fund.

The Governing Council, with reference to Decision 5 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2019/5) of its 2019 session, and Decision 3 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2020/3) of its 2020 session, once again expresses its appreciation to the UNECE secretariat for the elaboration of the draft legal documents for establishing a SPECA Fund: “Agreement on the establishment of the SPECA Fund”, “Statute of the SPECA Fund”, and “Headquarters Agreement” as well as the “Business Case for SPECA Fund” developed in 2021.

The Governing Council recommends considering other forms of establishing a SPECA Fund, including in the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) format, guided by the will of the SPECA countries to preserve the functioning of SPECA under the auspices of the United Nations. The Governing Council further requests the UNECE and ESCAP secretariats to prepare concepts of establishing the SPECA Fund in the MPTF format and invites the SPECA countries to participate in this process actively.

#### **Decision 6 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/6)**

In light of Decision 4 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2020/4) of its 2020 session, the Governing Council decides to establish a SPECA Working Group on Investments and Financial Technical Cooperation. The Governing Council welcomes the offer by the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan to chair and fully support the new SPECA Working Group on Investments and Financial Technical Cooperation. The Council elects Uzbekistan as a Chair country of the SPECA Working Group on Investments and Financial Technical Cooperation. The SPECA countries will request other relevant United Nations entities and international development partners to support this Working Group. The Governing Council encourages the Working Group to be led by the SPECA countries.

**Decision 7 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/7)**

The Governing Council reiterates its request to the SPECA participating countries to appoint/confirm their Focal Points for SPECA and focal points for each one of the Thematic Working Groups in writing to the UNECE and ESCAP secretariats no later than 31 March 2022.

**Decision 8 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/8)**

The Governing Council adopts the SPECA Work Plan for 2022-2023 as presented to the session. It encourages the SPECA participating countries, Thematic Working Groups, development partners and partner organizations to support the implementation of activities contained in the work plan.

**Decision 9 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/9)**

The Governing Council acknowledges the importance of circular economy and the sustainable use of natural resources in achieving SDGs, supporting economic prosperity and resilience, addressing environmental challenges, mitigating climate change, and recover from the COVID-19 crisis. The Governing Council recognises the value of the Environment for Europe process as a unique pan-European platform for addressing environmental challenges, improving environmental governance, promoting environmental and cross-sectoral cooperation and information sharing among countries.

**Decision 10 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/10)**

The Governing Council expresses its sincere gratitude to Uzbekistan for its active work as the Chair country of SPECA in 2021.

**Decision 11 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/11)**

The Governing Council decides that the SPECA Chair country for 2022, the exact dates and venue of the 2022 SPECA Economic Forum and the 17<sup>th</sup> session of the SPECA Governing Council will be agreed upon through diplomatic channels.

**Decision 12 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/12)**

The Governing Council expresses its sincere gratitude to Uzbekistan for the excellent organization of the sixteenth session of the SPECA Governing Council, the 2021 SPECA Economic Forum, and the sixteenth session of the SPECA Working Group on Trade in hybrid format, as well as the warm hospitality offered to the participants of the “2021 SPECA Days” in Tashkent.

**Decision 13 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2021/13)**

The Governing Council expresses its deep appreciation to the UNECE and ESCAP secretariats for their efforts to organize these important annual events, their active work aimed at strengthening SPECA and their continued support to the implementation of the Programme.

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