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Economic Commission for Europe

Executive Committee

125th meeting

Geneva, 30 November 2022

Item 3 of the provisional agenda

Update on Special Procedures during the COVID-19 period

Extension of Special Procedures during the COVID-19 period

Background

1. As of end October 2022, the scheduling of meetings of the official calendar is still impaired by mitigating measures to the COVID-19 pandemic and the reduced availability of conference room capacity at the United Nations Office at Geneva.
2. To ensure business continuity, and also taking into account a potential continuation/resumption of COVID-mitigation measures, the secretariat proposes to extend the Special Procedures during the COVID-19 period. This would permit the membership to retain the option of taking business-critical decisions, as needed. It is understood that the applicable special procedures would not be used if formal meetings can be held.

Draft Decision

The Executive Committee:

3. Authorizes the Chair of the Commission to continue using the Special Procedures during the COVID-19 period, initially adopted on 6 April 2020, for taking decisions of the Executive Committee until 15 May 2023;
4. Extends until 15 May 2023 the Special Procedures approved for subsidiary bodies of the:
 - (a) Inland Transport Committee, as contained in document ECE/EX/2020/L.4, initially adopted on 29 May 2020;
 - (b) Committee on Sustainable Energy, as contained in document ECE/EX/2020/L.4, initially adopted on 29 May 2020;
 - (c) Steering Committee on Trade Capacity and Standards, as contained in document ECE/EX/2020/L.10, initially adopted on 5 October 2020; and
 - (d) Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships, as contained in document ECE/EX/2020/L.11, initially adopted on 5 October 2020.



5. Extends until 15 May 2023 procedures to take decisions in formal meetings with remote participation, as contained in document ECE/EX/2020/L.12, and initially adopted on 5 October 2020 by the Executive Committee.
6. Underlines that these arrangements are exceptional and time-limited and requests the Secretariat to report back to the Executive Committee on their implementation throughout the COVID-19 situation.
7. Reiterates the importance of availability of meeting services in support of the official ECE calendar of meetings should a *force majeure* situation arise. This would include the exceptional provision of hybrid meeting support services and remote simultaneous interpretation, as needed. In this regard, EXCOM requests the ECE secretariat to continue its dialogue with relevant Secretariat entities at UN Headquarters to advance related contingency planning on the understanding that implementation of business continuity measures would not be funded from Sect.20 of the budget.
