



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

Eighteenth session of the SPECA Governing Council

(Baku, Azerbaijan, 23 November 2023)

DECISIONS

Decision 1 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/1)

The Governing Council notes with satisfaction the outcomes of the 2023 SPECA Economic Forum “Transforming the SPECA Region into a Connectivity Hub with Global Outreach” held in Baku from 21 to 22 November 2023. The Governing Council calls upon the SPECA participating States, UNECE and ESCAP, other United Nations agencies and programmes, and international development partners to provide active support to the efforts to build resilient trade, transport and energy connectivity along the trans-Caspian and other corridors in the SPECA region using the United Nations standards and legal instruments.

Decision 2 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/2)

The Governing Council endorses the Conclusions and Recommendations of the 2023 SPECA Economic Forum, urging for the more efficient use of the United Nations legal norms, standards, best practice recommendations and other instruments to support sustainable development in the region. The Council requests the participating States and development partners to support the implementation of these recommendations to transform the SPECA region into a connectivity hub based on the use of the UN norms, standards, and tools.

Decision 3 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/3)

The Governing Council notes with appreciation the Progress Reports on the activities of the SPECA Thematic Working Groups since its previous session and expresses satisfaction with the implementation of these activities.

The Governing Council notes with appreciation the activities of the SPECA Thematic Working Groups on Trade; Sustainable Transport, Transit and Connectivity; Water, Energy and Environment; Innovation and Technology for Sustainable Development; and Gender and SDGs.

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

Decision 4 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/4)

In light of Decision 4 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2022/4) of its seventeenth session in 2022, the Governing Council expresses gratitude to the Governments of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of

Azerbaijan and the ESCAP Secretariat for organizing an expert group meeting on 3 March 2023 conducting consultations among the SPECA participating States in order to reach a final decision on the establishment of a SPECA Secretariat. The expert meeting concluded that the consultations on establishing a SPECA Secretariat will be continued.

Decision 5 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/5)

In light of Decision 5 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2022/5) of its seventeenth session in 2022, the Governing Council expresses its appreciation to the UNECE and ESCAP secretariats, as well as the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office in New York for drafting Terms of Reference (ToR) for a UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) for SPECA and for holding several rounds of consultations with the SPECA participating States. The Council further notes the final draft of the MPTF ToR.

The Council suggests to the Governments of the SPECA participating States to establish the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) for SPECA using the draft MPTF ToR, as a flexible, inclusive funding mechanism for practical programmatic cooperation.

Decision 6 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/6)

The Council reviewed and endorsed the revised SPECA Terms of Reference (ToR).

Decision 7 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/7)

The Council notes with appreciation the efforts of the SPECA participating States, notably Azerbaijan as the Chair country in 2023, to draft and promote a UN General Assembly Resolution on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of SPECA as a major tool bolstering the status of SPECA as a Special Programme of the United Nations of high importance for the region.

Decision 8 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/8)

The Council notes with appreciation the efforts of the SPECA participating States, notably Azerbaijan, in the organization of the SPECA Summit on 24 November 2023, as a major step towards elevating the profile of SPECA and improving the regional cooperation for sustainable development in the region. The Council suggests that such high-level events may be organized in the future.

Decision 9 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/9)

The Council notes with appreciation the input of UNECE towards the preparation of the draft Roadmap for the Digitalization of Multimodal Data and Document Exchange along the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor, Using United Nations Legal Instruments and Standards. The Roadmap, as tabled by the Chair country, will be submitted for endorsement by the SPECA Summit on 24 November 2023. The Council calls for the SPECA participating States, UNECE, ESCAP, other UN and non-UN agencies, development partners, sectorial organizations, and the business community to take part in the implementation of this strategic Roadmap.

Decision 10 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/10)

The Governing Council adopts the SPECA Work Plan for 2024-2025 as presented to the session. It encourages the SPECA participating States, Thematic Working Groups, development partners and partner organizations to support the implementation of activities contained in the work plan.

Decision 11 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/11)

The Council elects Tajikistan as the next Chair country of SPECA.

The exact dates and venue of the 2024 SPECA Economic Forum and the nineteenth session of the SPECA Governing Council will be agreed upon and communicated through the diplomatic channels.

Decision 12 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/12)

The Governing Council reiterates its request to the SPECA participating States 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 2024.

Decision 13 (SPECA/GC/Dec/2023/13)

The Governing Council expresses its sincere gratitude to Azerbaijan for its active work as the Chair country of SPECA in 2023, for raising the profile of the Programme and energizing it for the years to come.

The Governing Council expresses its sincere gratitude to Azerbaijan for the excellent organization of the eighteenth session of the SPECA Governing Council, the 2023 SPECA Economic Forum, the eighteenth session of the SPECA Working Group on Trade, and the annual session of the SPECA Working Group on Gender and SDGs, as well as the warm hospitality offered to the participants of the SPECA Week in Baku, 20-24 November 2023.

Decision 14 (SPECA/GC/Nov/Dec/14)

The Governing Council expresses its 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.

Decision 15 (SPECA/GC/Nov/Dec/15)

The Governing Council welcomes the participation of Hungary as an honorary guest and looks forward to close engagement with Hungary within the SPECA activities in the future.
