



Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Office of Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic
and Environmental Activities

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UNECE Inland Transport Committee
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Item 12 – Issues that need consideration and require decisions by the Committee
(k) Border crossing and transit performance measurement

Statement by Mr. Roel Janssens
Economic and Environmental Adviser

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Distinguished participants,

Allow me to provide you, on behalf of the project management board, with some more details on the purpose and envisaged audience of the joint **OSCE-UNECE Handbook on Best Practices at Borders**. I also intend to clarify the substantial scope of the publication and the preparatory work already undertaken and still ahead of us.

Through the promotion of existing border-crossing best practices in the field, the Handbook's main purpose is to assist OSCE participating States (as well as UNECE member states), particularly landlocked countries with limited access to world markets, in developing more efficient border, transit transport and customs policies.

The handbook is expected to become a reference document for:

- national policy-makers
- senior customs, transport and border guard/police officials
- heads of regional customs chambers/border crossing points.

In addition, the OSCE-UNECE Handbook should also be made accessible to representatives of transport agencies, the business community, civil society and academia.

The publication will focus on border-crossing points along roads and railways, and at sea and airports.

More concretely, it will aim to:

- support the drafting of border management and transit policies,
- promote a balanced approach, paying due attention to facilitation as well as security facets of border crossings,
- highlight concrete and practical examples from across the OSCE region on how border-crossing points can be made more efficient, promoting legitimate trade and transport, while reducing opportunities for corruption, illicit trafficking, and transnational crime and terrorism,
- foster further dialogue on these issues in the OSCE region.

As we want the Handbook to i) address the real concerns experienced on a day-to-day basis by the relevant authorities in our participating States and ii) to reflect existing best practice experiences, we have held, in October of last year, two regional preparatory stakeholders' meetings: one in Minsk (for Eastern and Central Europe) and one in Bishkek (for Central Asia and South Caucasus). The valuable input received during these meetings will definitely find its way into the final product.

The Handbook is expected to be launched by the summer of 2009. Upon its publication (both in Russian and English) it will be distributed to the Permanent Delegations to the OSCE in Vienna and to the UNECE in Geneva as well as through OSCE field presences across the region. An official launch meeting bringing together high-level policy makers from the OSCE/UNECE region will be held after that to be followed by a number of sub-regional launch meetings in the autumn. Permitting funding we are currently considering the design of a capacity-building programme based on the Handbook's content. It goes without saying that this is an activity for which we would need the UNECE transport division's substantial support.

Thank you for your kind attention.