

SPECA Baku Event
Presentation by Johannes F. Linn
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Thank you, it is a great honor and pleasure to participate in this important event.

I reviewed recent SPECA work programs and progress reports found on-line,

- Valuable contributions with dialogue, knowledge work and training;
- But this should be complemented by three additional priority areas:

1. Regional standards and conventions: Development and support for standards and conventions is a mandate at UNECE's core and should also get principal attention under SPECA including:

- Transport (road safety, cross-border transit/TIR)
- Green energy
- Air and water pollution
- Dam safety
- Building codes (earthquake proof and green)
- Green education

2. Link support for conventions and standards with financing facilities:

- Without financing, standards and conventions don't get the attention they deserve;
- Financing for implementation: investment, capacity building, policy and regulatory change and for monitoring/enforcement; and ensure sustainability;
- Examples: Montreal Protocol, Systematic Observations Financing Facility (SOFF/WMO)
- This requires cooperation with financial organizations (MDBs, bilaterals) and regional bodies that focus on finance, esp. CAREC

3. Climate Change:

- Critical issue for the region and regional cooperation. See the CAREC Climate Change scoping study, published May 2023
- Important work carried out by UNECE/UNESCAP for Central Asia/SPECA over the last few years on selected climate change issues
- Consultation with UNECE colleagues for CAREC Climate Change Scoping study was very productive; SPECA has considerable capacity
- Not clear that this work effectively linked with other regional work by international partners/regional entities (esp. CAREC and CAREC Institute); need for coordination and division of labor
- SPECA could concentrate on dealing with issues relating to standards and conventions in climate area and their financing, and with "on-the-horizon" issues (hydrogen, Artificial Intelligence, carbon capture, circular economy, climate migration)

Three recommendations for SPECA:

1. Focus on standards/conventions and their financing
2. Focus on "on-the-horizon" climate issues for attention of ministers
3. Cooperate/coordinate with development partners in both areas