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TRANSPORT TRENDS AND ECONOMICS

Euro-Asian transport links

**Third International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport
(St. Petersburg, 11 - 12 September 2003)**

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DECLARATION

THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL EURO-ASIAN CONFERENCE ON TRANSPORT

(Russian Federation, St-Petersburg, September 11-12, 2003)

The representatives of Governments and parliaments of European and Asian countries, international transport, financial and other organizations and institutes, transport associations, commodity producers, cargo and container owners, official and commercial organizations participating in the Third International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport, held in St. Petersburg on September 11-12, 2003;

RECOGNIZING the important role of transport for achieving sustainable economic and social development of European and Asian countries in the context of increasing geostrategic importance Eurasian continent in the XXI century;

DESIRING to promote regional economic cooperation through the development of transport infrastructure and services markets;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT increasing demand for reliable, efficient, safe, secure, and environmentally friendly transport between Europe and Asia in order to promote international trade, tourism, business communications, cultural and sports exchanges as well as economic cooperation in the context of the globalization of the world economy;

CONSIDERING that expanded integration in transport sector, through the development of international transport corridors and increase in efficiency and transparency of this process as well as adherence to the open market economy principles define conditions for the elaboration of new ways of cooperation in the transport sector between countries of Europe and Asia aimed at the creating an integrated and harmoniously functioning Euro-Asian transport system;

RECKONING that efficient, secure, safe and environmentally friendly Euro-Asian transport should be based on the convergence of national laws and regulations and international transport agreements and conventions; facilitation and harmonization of transportation, customs and other border-crossing procedures, with priority given to those concerning transit traffic; coordinated development of transport infrastructure and related research;

RECOGNIZING the significance of related activities implemented by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), European Commission (EC), European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT), Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), Inter-Government Organisation for International Carriage by rail (OTIF), Organization for Railways Cooperation (OSZhD), International Coordinating Council of TransSiberian Transportation (CCTST), Coordinating Transport Meeting of the CIS member states, CIS Council on Railway Transport, International Railway Organization (UIC), international financial institutions and other international organizations;

EMPHASIZING the crucial role of the private sector and market mechanisms in the development of efficient logistics and transport services and its positive contribution to the development and modernization of transport infrastructure in Europe and Asia;

ACKNOWLEDGING the provisions of the Declarations of the Second and the Third Pan-European Transport Conferences (Crete, March 1994 and Helsinki, June 1997), the First and the Second International Euro-Asian Conferences on Transport (St. Petersburg, May 1998 and September 2000) and *CONSIDERING* other final documents of the Euro-Asian transport conferences and high-level meetings over the period from 2000 to 2003

Hereby

- A. Support measures and decisions concerning Euro-Asian transport links, including:
- adoption by the sixty-fifth session of the UNECE Inland Transport Committee of the Draft “Strategic Objectives of the Committee” making the activities related to development of Euro-Asian transport links a major priority (2003);
 - adoption of the Common UNECE-UNESCAP “Strategic Vision for Euro-Asian Transport Links” by the UNECE Inland Transport Committee (2001);

- the implementation of the UNECE-UNESCAP Joint Programme on development of Euro-Asian Transport Links, and the UNDA Project on Capacity Building in developing interregional land and land-cum-sea transport linkages approved by the UN General Assembly;
 - UNESCAP resolutions 52/9 on Intra-Asia and Asia-Europe landbridges and 48/11 on road and rail transport modes in relation to facilitation measures;
 - implementation of Phase II of the UNESCAP Regional Action Programme (2002-2006) of the New-Delhi Action Plan on Infrastructure Development in Asia and the Pacific, approved by the Second Ministerial Conference on Infrastructure (2001);
 - publication of the EU White Paper, "European Transport Policy for 2010: time to decide" by the European Commission;
 - entry into force of the Agreement on the North-South International Transport Corridor, creation and adoption of the North-South International Transport Corridor Coordinating Council (2002), and the accession of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Republic of Belarus to the Agreement;
 - creation of the Steering Committee on the planning and implementation of container block-trains along the Trans-Asian railway Northern corridor (2002);
 - carrying out of demonstration runs of container block-trains on two of four Euro-Asian transport corridors: "TransSiberian" and "Southern" (2002);
 - development of UNESCAP methodology for analysis of international transport routes to identify physical and non-physical barriers;
 - development of the Agreement on the Asian Highway within the framework of the UNESCAP integrated Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development (ALTID) Project;
 - establishment of the Euro-Asian Transport Union (EATU) in pursuance of the resolutions adopted by the Second Euro-Asian Conference on Transport (2000).
- B. Confirm guidelines on development of the Euro-Asian transport corridors established by the Declaration adopted by the Second International Euro-Asian Conference on Transport (St. Petersburg, 2000).
- C. Reiterate support to the principles and guidelines reflected in section "C" of the above-mentioned Declaration.
- D. Recommend the following strategy for the Euro-Asian transport system development:
- formulation of integrated intermodal international Euro-Asian transport routes/corridors and networks;
 - formalisation of international transport routes/networks through related international agreements or amendments to existing one, as a basis for their

coordinated development;

- facilitation of transport at border-crossing, ports, etc. based on relevant international conventions and establishing where necessary national transport/trade facilitation committees comprising representatives of all ministries and parties involved;
- analysis of routes/corridors to identify physical and non-physical barriers;
- operationalization of international transport routes through efficient operational arrangements/mechanisms for each international route and periodical performance evaluation of each of the routes;
- introduction/development of modern information technology;
- development of transport logistics;
- development of Public-Private Partnership with freight forwarders and multimodal transport operators playing role in all relevant decision making processes;
- further development of efficient cooperation between international and other organizations involved;
- particular attention to be given to needs of landlocked countries and economies in transition.

Recommend the following initiatives to develop an integrated Euro-Asian transport system:

1) *in the field of infrastructure development:*

- intensification of work relating to the UNECE-UNESCAP Joint Programme on development of the Euro-Asian transport links, including the establishment of the UNECE-UNESCAP Task Force, in cooperation with representatives of the European Commission, interested countries and concerned international organizations, to coordinate international developmental efforts, as approved by the UNECE Inland Transport Committee; as well as the actions foreseen by the UNECE-UNESCAP Project component on Euro-Asian transport links of the UNDA Project;
- establishment, within the UNECE, in close cooperation with UNESCAP, of an effective mechanism that will ensure continuous monitoring of developments and support for all activities of various actors involved in the development of the Euro-Asian Transport links;
- continuation of the work on ensuring the interoperability of transport networks in Europe and Asia, especially the coordination on technical standards (applied to new and upgraded high-speed railways, highways, major inland waterways on the basic Euro-Asian transport corridors);
- enlarge of the “E” road, railway, waterway and combined transport networks include countries in the Caucasus and Central Asia;

- formation of the common international telecommunicational network in transport system providing the effective functioning of the Euro-Asian transport corridors;
- coordination of the efforts of international organizations (UNECE, UNESCAP, ECMT, BSEC, OTIF, OSZhD, etc.) aimed at development of combined transport infrastructure , in particular by preparing the new Euro-Asian Agreement on the major lines of the combined transport based on the existing European Agreement;
- development of international multimodal and logistics transport hubs;
- promotion of transport innovations as well as fundamental and applied scientific research oriented towards creation of an integrated Euro-Asian transport system and elaboration of harmonized technical parameters of the international transport corridors infrastructure, allocating sufficient funds for it.

2) *in the field of modern freight technologies:*

- accelerated development of combined transport using the same carrying unit or vehicle without transshipment of freight, envisaging , in particular, the use of railway ferries, and ships' lighters encouraging combined and piggyback carriages;
- continuation of demonstration runs of block trains along the Euro-Asian transport corridors as one of the efficient ways of demonstrating the advantages of railway transport in the context of transport links between Europe and Asia; to support the joint UNESCAP/OSZhD project on development of container transport by block trains between Asia and Europe;
- intensification of work on the unification of the legal basis regulating transport activities and concerning the technology of transport processes; increase the quality and safety of carriages; reducing the impact on the environment, and accelerate accession of European and Asian countries to the international conventions and agreements regulating transport issues;
- expansion of network of transport terminals used for intermodal transshipment;
- implementation of a harmonized tariff policy for container transport on the main rail lines and highways of Euro-Asian transport corridors;
- support for the development and construction of complex multimodal transport units suitable for use in short sea shipping and inland waterway transport.

3) *In the sphere of expansion of access to the market of transport services:*

- further promotion of the Euro-Asian transport integration processes on the basis of related international agreements and conventions, standards and principles of international trade and transport services by removing the practice of applying discriminatory taxes and duties and by eliminating any other discrimination of suppliers and users of transport services;

- increase participation of the private sector and other stakeholders in the early stages of infrastructure planning;
 - encourage open and fair competition between various transport routes and transport modes on the Euro-Asian links by stimulating the development of alternative routes.
- 4) *In the field of the promotion of development of tourism*
- development of passenger transport services between Europe and Asia as the basis for the intensification of international tourism, business communications, culture and sports, initiating activities in related sectors of economies and encouraging the inflow of foreign direct investments .
- 5) *In the sphere of information technologies*
- creation and introduction of a harmonized information system in European and Asian countries, including the content of messages, data interchange, automatic issue and electronic processing of transport and accompanying documents ensuring information protection from unauthorized access;
 - creation of the common information space by introduction of a harmonized information system for economic actors on transport markets in European and Asian countries, including the establishment of a databank, electronic data interchange, automatic issuance and electronic processing of transport and accompanying documents, development of the telecommunication networks in transport;
 - creation of integrated information interfaces for combined transport and development of the telecommunicational networks in transport for equal access to information for the users of all countries;
 - implementation of non-discriminatory access for all customers to administrative services;
 - creation of “single window” - services to those companies who are not able or willing to communicate with the authority by themselves;
 - creation of an electronic database within the framework of the UNECE-UNESCAP Joint Programme on development of the Euro-Asian transport links as well as Euro-Asian transport map, displaying information about all projects, transport routes and corridors;
 - promotion the new information management systems established in framework of joint projects where several countries and organisations are involved.
- 6) *In the field of safety and reduction of the impact of transport on the environment:*
- intensification of work on safety measures and continuous fight against illegal activities and terrorism on all Euro-Asian transport corridors and in all modes of transport;

- exchange of best practices and implementation of the security requirements, imposed by International Maritime Organization and the European Union with regard to shipping and port facilities;
- reduction of the negative impacts of transport growth – such as casualties, emissions and noise – by designing and implementing international standards and rules, and by stimulating research and development on new safe, environmentally friendly, secure vehicle and infrastructure technologies;
- strengthening of cooperation in prevention and dealing with emergencies caused by natural disasters and technological accidents as well as in the implementation of joint environmental projects;
- acceleration of the work on regional agreements on search;
- rescue operations and countering accidental oil spillages.

7) *With regard to improvement and rationalization of customs procedures and simplification of border crossings:*

- support the OSZhD initiative to convene an international meeting in order to discuss issues concerning simplification of railway border crossing procedures;
- reduction of the border stopping time for customs, sanitary, veterinary and phytosanitary controls;
- intensification of work on the facilitation of activities of international transport operators by regulating procedures for the issuance of entry visas for certificated professional crews in all modes of transport;
- implementation of measures facilitating border crossing of the European and Asian countries by road vehicles, including simplification of border checking procedures, cancellation of transshipment bond notes in case of application of the TIR Convention, cancellation of the obligatory registration of licenses on all classes of dangerous products, except for those stipulated by ADR.

8) *For attracting investments in transport infrastructure:*

- attract public, private and foreign investment for the development of the transport sector, and financing of large-scale infrastructure projects aimed at increasing the carrying capacity of main railway lines, and motorway infrastructure, as well as inland waterways, seaport and airport capacities and their performance, based on positive socio-economic assessment of these projects;
- assess economic and social consequences of the implementation of the Euro-Asian international transport infrastructure development projects on the basis of “A set of Guidelines for Socio-Economic Cost Benefit analysis of transport infrastructure project appraisal” , published by the UNECE;

- promotion and use of various schemes of public and private partnership (PPP) when implementing and developing transport infrastructure investment projects on Euro-Asian corridors;
 - development of appropriate cooperation in the field of transport; establishment and organization of cooperation ties; introduction of leasing, insurance and deposit funds;
 - creation of industrial and commercial investment associations with possible capital participation of the from third countries for the realization of joint investment projects and the increase in efficiency of use of transport infrastructure;
 - development of international financial and banking structures for attracting finance capital for the modernization of the infrastructure of the international transport corridors.
- D. Recommend the following measures to be implemented as the Conference decisions:
- to hold the next International Euro-Asian conference on transport in 2006;
 - to establish the Conference's permanent organizing committee on the basis of the Euro-Asian Transport Union;
 - to request UNECE and UNESCAP to continue and further intensify their activities on Euro-Asian transport links in close cooperation with other international organisations concerned and with the active participation of the countries involved.
- E. Express appreciation to the Government of the Russian Federation for the organization of this Conference; note the efforts made by participating States in implementing international agreements on development of efficient, secure, safe and environmentally friendly transport on Euro - Asian transport routes, stressing as well the positive contribution of the private sector to improvements in passenger and freight traffic between Europe and Asia.

St.-Petersburg,

September 12, 2003
